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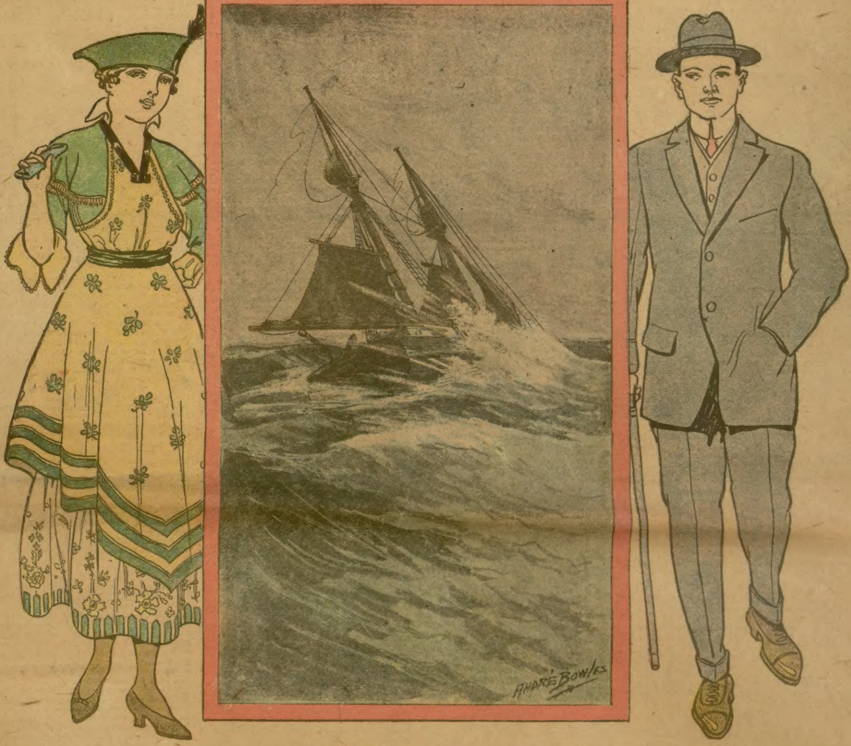

THE SPIDER'S AMBUSH

:-: :-: Or, :-: :-:

Strangely Mated Comrades

By Victor Ardmore

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CHAPTER I.

WIND and water were making a plaything of the rowboat on Lake Ontario, and the man at the oars labored with desperation to oppose their fury. To lose control of the little craft for a moment was to upset, and to upset was to drown. Death rode the waves with him, and clutched at the gunwales.

The man did not know where he was. Ontario was wide, and total darkness shut him in. Direction had been lost previously, and he was driving rapidly without knowledge of where he was going. He was no coward, but he knew the chances of surviving that trial were few. Strength failed him, and the wind increased.

Presently a new sound came to him, and he knew he was near land upon which the headlong waves were being dashed. Alarmed afresh, he tried to change direction, but without avail. Almost arrow-like, he was swept forward until he dimly saw the shape of trees.

The rest came quickly. The boat was cast upon the land, and the man flung forward. He struck heavily, but did not lose consciousness, and hastily rallied and crawled to where the water did not break. There he lay for some minutes, and then sat up. After a pause another movement took him to his feet.

"No bones broken!" he muttered, after testing legs and arms. "I'm a lucky man."

Investigation showed that his boat had been carried away, so he was left a wrecked man on a strange stretch of earth.

"Must be the Canadian shore," he mused. "If so, I shall soon get somewhere. I'll be starting."

He carried matches, and examination showed that they were dry, so he lighted one to see the time. Flaring erratically in the wind he could only partly avoid he saw what he wanted, for the light shone on the face of his watch. The same light revealed something more that might have impressed a stranger. Pinned to the breast of his vest was a bright, oddly-shaped badge of some sort.

Facing north he walked briskly, anxious to get somewhere without delay.

His was not an idle life, and he had work to do. A hundred yards he went, and then the ground fell away and a swampy place was before him. It seemed to be wide, and, not trying to avoid it, he pushed on steadily. Another hundred yards was passed over, and then he suddenly halted.

"Can this be Upper Crusoe?" he exclaimed, freshly worried.

He had named an island off the Canadian shore, and one no night wanderer would willingly visit, since it was a difficult place to leave without a boat. He had never been there before, but belief in his situation was due to the fact that he knew of no swampy land on the shore near where he supposed himself to be.

"If it's Crusoe I'm a prisoner," he muttered morosely.

There was but one thing for him to do, and that was to plod on and try to make sure of his situation. He went, moved deeper into the swamp, but presently found himself at a loss for his bearings. Then he came to slightly rising ground and trod on dry soil. Pine twigs cracked under his feet and enticing odors reached his nostrils.

"Better!" he commented. "Much better——"

His words were interrupted and he dropped to the ground, felled by a blow that seemed to rend his head. Astonished, he tried to rise, but found himself seized by human hands. He was restrained and held fast.

Strange voices sounded, unintelligible words in guttural tones and in anger grated around him.

"What are you doing?" he cried thickly. "Let me alone——"

He was lifted and borne away, struggling, until other blows stung his head and forced him into half-dazed silence. He was carried forty feet, a hut was reached, his bearers went inside, and he was flung down heavily. A single order was given, and his eyes were bandaged and his hands tied. His legs were left free, but hostile hands were still upon him.

Mingled with his mental confusion was wonder that he was being thus used. He was either on the Canadian shore or on Upper Crusoe Island, and it seemed to be no place for such lawless work.

Hands ransacked his garments, robbing him of all he had in the way of valuables, and then he was left alone, except for the one man who held him.

What followed might perhaps have interested him had he seen it. A little ray of light from an oddly contrived electric torch shot out horizontally. A band of light that pierced the darkness brightly in a limited section and none beyond. It revealed a table with three men standing by it—men strangely dressed, but because of the upper darkness, invisible above their breasts.

The things of which they had robbed him had been spread on the table—a little money, a handkerchief, a knife, a pipe and a few minor articles. These the robbers passed by contemptuously, but something else held their attention.

It was a silver object much like a badge, but one that no police officer or detective in either Canada or the United States would have recognized. It seemed to perplex those who now examined it. It passed from hand to hand, and was scanned by the different pairs of eyes, but longest it lingered in the possession of a man with surprisingly long arms who seemed to be the leader.

All the while the guttural tones rolled forth, and the prisoner had grown calm enough to detect an added note of hostility in the voices that spoke no word that he understood. To them it was like a red flag to a turbulent animal, and the long-armed leader tapped his clawlike finger upon its lettering that was so mysterious to him.

"L. C. U.
"E. W."

Harmless letters, taken by themselves, but productive of fury to those who could not understand. Suddenly the leader cast the badge down, cried forth an order, and all flung themselves upon the prisoner.

CHAPTER II.

ALDEN RAINBAR sat in gloomy silence, looking into the night that had settled upon the American town without seeing either the darkness, the rocks and trees close at hand, or the waters of Lake Ontario that tumbled roughly off the shore, borne toward Canada by the wayward breeze. Tyler had found him there, a short time before, and the conversation had not been enlivening.

"So you're bound to do it?"

Tyler broke a silence with the question, and his friend came slowly out of abstraction.

"I've got to do it," Rainbar replied.

"And your evidence will send him to prison?"

"Yes. I'm the only witness that can give direct evidence. Nobody doubts that he passed the check, but I'm the only one who saw him sign it."

"I suppose his daughter made a strong plea for mercy, based wholly on sentimental grounds."

"Huh! If you think Miss Lucelia Parlin is a mere sentimentalist you make a slight error," Rainbar returned ruefully. "She is a devoted daughter—no doubt about that—and she did plead eloquently, but when she saw I was resolved to do my duty and appear in court, she became a dynamo of force. Scalped me!"

"Oh!"

"She had dwelt largely on her claim that the check Mr. Parlin signed was not the one he passed, and, in brief, that he signed no check except with his own name, and when she saw I held fast to facts she gave an opinion of me that I blush to repeat. She was still the refined lady, but she gave an estimate of me, based upon my determination to appear in court, that didn't hold a compliment, you bet! I was scalped!"

He laughed as he said it, but the laugh was not spontaneous.

"I wish I had been at the North Pole when this happened," he added. "Parlin always seemed like a fine old gentleman, and the girl is good to look upon, but what am I to do? Her plan was that I should abscond to avoid appearing in court, but that would make me a criminal, too."

"I reckon you've got to testify," Tyler commented.

"Fact! I'll be there."

This was the windup of their conversation, and they separated. Rainbar had an errand to do, but he promised to meet his friend at the club at 8 o'clock. The appointment was not kept. The next day it was generally known that Rainbar had mysteriously disappeared. His friends worried, but others had an explanation that pleased rather than troubled them.

"Parlin's daughter has been to see him, and now he has skipped to avoid testifying against her father."

This judgment was as near right as the random guesses of the world usually are, but wide from the truth. What had really happened to the missing man was a different matter.

When Rainbar left Tyler he caught a sudden puff of wind and casually noticed that a black cloud was climbing up the sky, threatening a squall, but he did not feel interested. What was it to him that a wind was rising? He had an answer to this unthought-of question before the night passed.

His errand took him across an unsettled locality in the outskirts of the city, a place where nature was still unchecked by man. He invaded this place, deviating only when trees and rocks prevented a direct course.

There was, at one point, a natural mound of piled-up rocks with bushes between them, and this he proceeded to skirt. The distance was twenty feet, but the night was not long enough for him to walk across that little space.

He was halfway, his head bent and his mind far away, when something fell over his head and rough hands seized him, and despite a stout resistance against odds he was soon subdued, bound, picked up and carried away like a log. Helpless, he tried to guess who had kidnaped him and what was to be done with him. It was all he could do, for he was able neither to fight nor to run.

Five minutes later something suddenly rocked under him, and he was dumped down without ceremony. He was in a boat. Trying to sit up, he was thrust back roughly. Words penetrated the blanket that was over his head.

"Lie still, you fool, or I'll beat your brains out!"

Rainbar lay still. To shout was to call only to an unfrequented shore, and he sensed the fact that his enemies were not to be trifled with. He uneasily recalled the fact that bodies were occasionally found on the lakeshore, the remains of men who had died by violence, and mysteriously.

"Lake Ontario has a devil," a police officer had once said to him in confidence. "There is a killer somewhere who has a motive, and he strikes me as being out of the common run. I intend to find him, tho I figure that he lives on the Canadian side."

Just then, Rainbar would have felt more comfortable if the killer had been found and exterminated.

Feet tramped, oars dipped, and the boat moved. Behind it was the prisoner's home, and beyond its bows—what?

The wind had increased, the water was rough and high-running, and the boat rolled so much that an irregular splash over the gunwales made an accumulation under the bound man that was suggestive. He was thinking of this when there was a slight shock, the oars were drawn inboard, and a voice sounded just beyond.

"All right?"

"All right," was the reply from the boat.

"Fling him aboard!"

Rainbar was lifted, passed over some hard object, and dropped down again. He sensed the fact that he was in a ship of some sort.

"Leave him there," added an unseen man. "We've got to make sail and scud for it. I don't like this wind nor the waves."

Definite orders were given, and movements and sounds followed that Rainbar was enough of a waterman to understand, while presently he realized that they were under way. Kidnaped, he was a helpless passenger.

Perhaps five minutes more had elapsed when the blanket was roughly removed and he was pulled to his feet.

"Can you hear me?" demanded the nearest man.

"Yes," sulkily replied the prisoner.

"I'll give you the freedom of the schooner. Stay on deck or go below, just as you please."

"See here," cried Rainbar, hotly, "I demand to be taken ashore."

"Rubbish! Don't you know that the motive that led us to carry you away prevents us from returning you? Stop! No more talk now, for I haven't one second to waste on you. My vessel needs my attention. You can talk later, if you want to. That's all for now!"

The speaker moved away, and the captive, indignant at being disposed of so briefly and contemptuously, was hesitating whether to lay violent hands upon him, when a fresh sweep of the wind caught the schooner, and he was glad to catch at a rope and hang hard. He would do himself no good by being pitched overboard.

When the craft settled more comfortably upon her keel, he took a longing look toward the New York shore, but not many minutes had passed before one other matter absorbed all his attention.

The squall was increasing in fury. The wind was violent, and the water, lashed into responsive fury, hurled itself upon the thing of wood so furiously that Rainbar recalled the many wrecks Lake Ontario had seen in his day, and grew interested in the problem of avoiding another.

The master of the schooner was doing his best, studying the needs of each minute, and sending out orders in penetrating tones. Plainly, it was not the plan to run directly before the squall, and fine seamanship was necessary to keep the wind on the starboard quarter and avoid wreck. Right there the captain showed his skill, and admiration grew upon the passenger as he saw how the vessel was handled. He was a capable sailor, and this was well, for all lives aboard depended upon his ability.

His name came to Rainbar a little later, when a lesser mariner spoke it clearly. Delcann! The name was new, but it was well to remember it. His prisoner wanted to show him that the law, too, could seize and hold.

Again his thoughts came back to the danger of the hour, and he held tighter to the rope and watched the few things he could see. Outboard view was impossible, for low-hanging clouds and driven spray made the lake a black pall that baffled all attempts to see. The upper rigging, too, was invisible, and the demon of the squall permitted nothing more than sight of a portion of the deck. Into this black area of gloom the schooner was driving wildly.

There was a killer on Ontario that night who had no human form. This killer used wind and tumbling water.

During a brief lull two of the sailors exchanged words near the prisoner.

"Say, do you know where we are?" was the first call.

"Not I," was the frank reply.

"Does the skipper know?"

"How can he? For twenty minutes our fight has been simply to keep the Wide Awake right side up. No course can be held. Worst night I ever saw on the lake."

"The crew of the Whitefoot Mary saw just as bad."

"Ay, and were all drowned. See what's ahead of us, don't you?"

The men, hardened to danger, laughed aloud, but Rainbar did not feel in mood for anything of the kind. He remembered the wreck of the Whitefoot Mary, and found nothing pleasant in the recollection.

He turned to face rather than look at Delcann. The masterful captain's voice was still unshaken, but he no longer seemed so much like a tower of safety. Man had become a mere blot in the squall, and chance was stronger than human wits.

Where, beset by the elements, were they heading for? Presumably the Canadian shore was somewhere off the bows, but it would be a bad thing to drive upon when at that speed. If they went aground——

His thoughts came back to the deck. Something had whipped around his ankles, and it lacked the harsh touch of torn and flying canvas. Again the whip of the fabric, and he realized that two women were beside him, exposed to the lash of the squall and the pitch of the schooner. Before he could speak they were gone, having passed toward the stern.

"Madness!" he mused. "They will be swept from the deck. If I were not being used like a dog I'd volunteer my poor help, but they are probably friends of this gang, so why should I bother?"

Another thought came quickly.

"Friends or foes, they are women."

He let go of the rope, was tossed against the rail, and barely saved himself from going overboard. Recovering his balance, he fought his way astern and soon came upon the wearers of the whipping fabric. They had paused, holding to each other and whatever else they could find. Just then a rope was better than a million dollars.

"Where, oh where, is the captain?" cried a feminine voice that was practically a wail.

"Hush, Annabel, hush!" was the answer from the second woman. "The captain is too busy to bother with us."

"It will be no bother to him, and his duty is here."

"His duty is with his ship."

"But I know we shall drown."

"Annabel, pray be still. This is a time for bravery. Try to be calm. I won't admit disaster until I have to."

Rainbar slipped a little further forward, saved himself from calamity by catching at a rope, and then raised his voice to sound the hope that was not backed up by his expectations.

"Don't be alarmed!" he shouted. "We shall pull thru this blow."

"Do you know where we are?" came in swift response.

"Well—no! But the captain has the schooner well in hand."

"No human being can govern a vessel in this squall," declared Annabel. "We shall drive to wreck on the north shore and drown."

"That will do!" snapped Rainbar. "This is a time for courage, not for cowardice. Summon your nerve."

He spoke bluntly, having guessed that Annabel was a servant and her companion a mistress.

"Do you really think we shall live thru it?" asked the mistress, a quaver perceptible in her own tones.

"No doubt of it," returned Rainbar, cheerfully. "For a brief puff this squall is lively, but not dangerous. Trust the captain."

"He is to be trusted as far as human skill goes, but——"

She released one hand from the rope long enough to wave eloquently toward the storm, and the motion was as suggestive as what she said. The recent comforter was herself betraying fear now.

"Remember," he added, "that the lake is a place where ships live thru many perils. This is one of them, I am sure."

"Why don't you talk sense?" cried Annabel.

"Hush!" cautioned her mistress. "Are you a sailor, sir?"

"Only the poorest kind of an amateur."

"I really wish somebody could tell me what our chances are."

"You will soon see that they are good. The skipper will fetch us around out of the danger-track, and then we'll make port. I have confidence in him, for I've seen his way. Keep up your courage."

"Oh! I have courage enough," was the spirited reply, "but that is something only of use like a crutch. It won't stay the squall——"

Words were dropped as the Wide Awake heeled sharply to port, and Rainbar, looking, saw a white wall looming over the starboard rail. He swung an arm and caught hold of the girl, and then came the deluge. A great sea broke inboard, sweeping the deck, and Rainbar felt himself borne away with a vicious rush. The schooner was left behind, and he was adrift, but his arm held to the girl tenaciously.

What happened next was never very clear. The best of swimmers would have been helpless there, and he was not even fairly good in that way. For a moment he tried to do his best, but gave it up as useless waste of strength. The power of man was as nothing in that drive of water.

It was then that he abandoned hope, tho, with the ruling passion strong even in death, he struggled on, seeking to keep his lungs clear of the flood and still holding to his burden. He could not feel that she moved of her own effort, but that was uncertain.

Adrift in Lake Ontario, and—then he felt a change in the motion of the seas, something like a lull of a couple of seconds, and next a shock that was like the parting with life.

Vaguely aware that they had gone aground, he bethought himself of the waves that would chase after them, and he clutched the girl the tighter and, unable to rise, crawled abjectly along. A foot, five feet, twenty feet he went, and then strength failed and a black something came before him.

He fell prostrate, unconscious.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN conscious life ebbed back to Rainbar he found himself lying on his back, drenched and aching, with night still around him and rain falling from a black sky, but he certainly was alive and did not feel like one near the parting of the ways.

Brief confusion of mind was followed by recollection of what had happened before, and he instinctively reached out to find the girl he had borne with him in the forced flight to land. She was not where she had been when his hold relaxed.

He tried to gain his feet, and after a struggle succeeded. Almost immediately a voice sounded a little beyond.

"You man, you, come and help me!"

He saw something, made for that quarter, and discovered two women, the one kneeling, the other prostrate.

"Can't you be of some use?" demanded she who kneeled.

"Annabel, Annabel!" cried a second person, "no more help is needed. I am all right. Let the poor man care for himself, for he must need to."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Rainbar. "So you are both alive? I have an intuition that it's the same way with me. Don't say you are injured!"

"I won't say it, and I don't think I am. Annabel has told me I am not. Your hand, Annabel!"

She partly rose, and not only the servant but Rainbar hastened to give her help. She stood erect, moved a little, and then laughed half-nervously.

"Not harmed a bit," she added, "and—certainly, I'm alive. It's almost past belief. Alive!"

"And with our feet on the good old earth," Rainbar pursued, with a responsive laugh. "Strong as the wind is, it can't bully this footing. It's no ship of wood. By the way, what about the schooner? Is she smashed on this shore?"

"I've seen no vessel or men," Annabel replied, "and I've been conscious longer than the rest of you. Yes, for I didn't lose my senses at all."

Further talk brought forth the fact that, while two of their number had been stunned by the shock when cast to land, the servant had only been briefly confused and incapacitated. Recovering, she had dragged the girl farther away from the breaking seas, and then began ministering to her. The man had been left to regain his dulled faculties at his leisure.

Finding, now, that nobody was seriously injured, Rainbar started on a trip of investigation. By all the rules of the game the Wide Awake should be ashore, stove in and wrecked hopelessly, while her men ought to be dead or ashore with the passengers.

Keeping clear of the water he walked until the land fell away in a new line, and then tried the opposite point. When this had been done he was certain the schooner had escaped going aground, or had gone entirely to pieces, crushed at the water's edge. He rejoined his companions in adversity, made due report, and then briskly added:

"We must find a better spot than this. Fortunately, the air is not cold, but we are exposed to the wind, and it has teeth. I see trees beyond. Let's get to cover. I have matches in a case that defies the wet, so we can start a fire if there is anything dry to burn. The blaze may bring us help. Where are we, anyhow?"

"I don't know," replied the girl.

"Must be the Canadian shore—or an island."

"Yes."

"It was a providence to us, since that breaking sea swept our part of the deck as it did. Since there is no wreckage visible I have a strong hope that the schooner went clear, and that nobody else was lost overboard. Can you walk? Ah! that's it!"

She had tried, and successfully. He would have given her his arm, but Annabel forestalled him, only to be rebuffed.

"I am no weakling," said the girl, with spirit, "and I'll go unaided. Lead on, sir, if you think you can find cover. I admit that this drenched condition is not to my taste."

"We will soon mend that," declared Rainbar, heartily.

He was not so sure as he pretended, for there was good reason to believe that everything was as wet as themselves, and his sole cutting implement was a medium-sized pocketknife. Something must be done, however.

They reached and entered the woods. There was but little undergrowth, but the treetops met overhead, and there was difficulty in avoiding collision with the trunks in the blackness. They had gone a hundred yards, and he was thinking of calling a halt when something besides a tree barred the way. He put out a hand, and then sounded a cry of exultation.

"A shack, by George! Here is cover, and if it proves of the right sort we shall be in clover. Perhaps——"

He was fumbling for a door, and after a short delay he found it. It was on the latch, but yielded readily to his touch.

"Anybody there?" he demanded.

There was no answer, and he bade his companions wait and stepped inside. Striking a match he saw, almost at once, a lamp on a wall shelf. It was almost too good to be true, but not too good to be used then. He made a light and called cheerfully to the women.

"Come right in. All the luxuries of the season wait for your use. I make the guess that there will even be open plumbing——"

"Better than that, there is shelter," interrupted the girl.

Both she and Annabel began to survey their new quarters. They saw a room something like fifteen feet square, furnished with a table made of rough boards laid upon stakes that had been driven into the ground for a support, and two stools as rudely constructed. Also, there was a bunk against one of the walls, and, as a suggestive mystery, a door in another wall.

"What," the girl asked, "is beyond there?" and she pointed at the door.

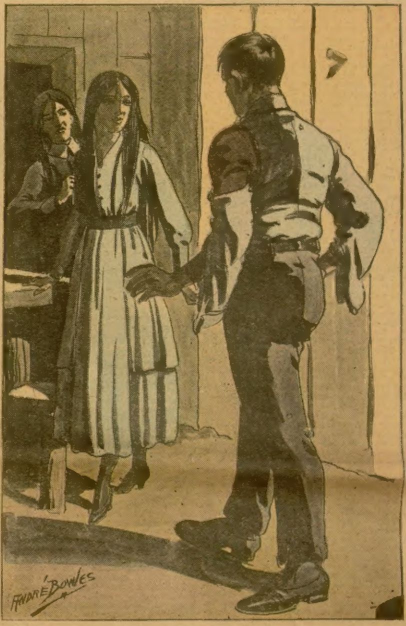
Rainbar did not reply. Instead, he was gazing at her in blank astonishment. Afterward he wondered that he had not surmised the truth before, but it was wholly new to him that he recognized Lucella Parlin. It was now clear to him that he had been kidnaped to prevent him from appearing in court against her father.

She turned and surprised that amazed stare, and a curious light of understanding came into her eyes, but she said nothing. She knew that she was recognized, but did not see fit to comment then.

"There may be horrible men beyond that door," said Annabel, in a whisper. "It is not another outside door, and murderers may be asleep there. O-h-h!"

Rainbar forced himself out of his abstraction, studied the door for a moment, and then strode to that point and flung it back. He saw a tiny, vacant room beyond, but caught up the lamp and investigated fully.

"Two compartments here, each about six feet by four, and each equipped with a bunk," he reported. "No mortal man around. The place has been deserted a long while. Look about you! Dust everywhere, sure sign of disuse. The shack is at once innocent and a blessing. It provides us with shelter, and you will notice some minor things that would be useful if we had food. Here are a few cooking utensils, and dishes, knives and other truck. We have a house furnished and dry, and that means a whole lot while the lake is rearing and the sky is disbursing rain in clouds. Old Man Luck has provided for us bountifully."



She knew she was recognized.

Miss Parlin took possession of a stool with a sigh of relief.

"Better than being afloat in the waters outside," she commented thankfully. "It is good to be alive. I think I remember that that is not an original remark, but it fits the case. Saved!"

"But when shall we get away from here——"

Annabel began gloomily, but her mistress interrupted.

"This," she declared, "is no time for forebodings of evil. I thank Providence that our lives are saved."

Then she turned quickly to Rainbar.

"Sir," she added, and her voice quivered, "next to Providence I owe much, everything, yes, even life to you. You held fast to me when we went adrift, and crawled laboriously up the land after we were cast ashore. I am deeply grateful."

"Possibly I deserve commendation," he returned, "tho I doubt it. I had to crawl beyond the clutch of the seas or drown. I preferred to crawl."

"But you took me to safety also, so I thank you. Now, where are we?"

"Probably on the Canadian shore."

"Quite as likely, on an island. If the schooner was wrecked and her crew drowned, who will know of our plight, who rescue us?"

"We can build a bonfire and thus call for help. That reminds me, we must have warmth. You will notice that we have a Noah-like stove, and that dry wood is piled against the wall. Watch us growl!"

Miss Parlin's gloomy expression awakened a little pity in Rainbar's mind. He forgave her temporarily and set to work. Moving toward the pile of wood he suddenly stopped short, stared downward, and then stooped and picked something up. Several times he turned the object over, eying it carefully, and then went to the table and dropped it there.

"A silver badge!" Lucella exclaimed.

She picked it up, mildly curious. In shape it was an irregular oblong, with a Greek cross raised on its surface. She noticed lettering, too, and read aloud:

"L. C. U.
"E. W."

"Can it be a police badge?" she asked.

"No, neither New York nor Canadian. I'm familiar with both. Somebody lost it here. Mighty queer thing. I wonder if the owner is alive? Never mind—the stove calls louder than the badge."

A few minutes later the fire was aglow, and the castaways basked in the heat and could defy the wind and rain outside. It was a strange situation. Failing to induce Rainbar to flee the country, Lucella had, it seemed, lawlessly kidnaped him. Now, by the upheaval of Ontario, they were thrust into a dilemma where their interests were for a time one. Tho selected by fate for enmity, they must work together in harmony, for the man was not now the only captive. A wild land had them both.

After a short time Rainbar thought it well to look for signs of the schooner and their late companions. He went out, followed the shore for some distance, failed to discover anything of importance and then returned.

He saw that Lucella was sagging with fatigue, and that the servant was nodding, so he suggested rest for all. Only pine boughs appeared for bed equipments, but these were not to be disdained. He retired to one of the smaller rooms, and the shack became silent.

"Mighty queer!" muttered Rainbar, as he lay and stared at the darkness above his head. "She stole me away, helpless lamb that I was, and now—well, we are both in for it. What 'it' is remains to be seen. Yes, it's certainly very queer. The girl got me, and the squall got us both. I wonder——"

The rest was lost as he fell asleep. After a time he dreamed of the struggle in the waters of the lake and awoke with a start. The dream had rendered him uneasy, and new ideas came to him, ideas that disquieted him, despite his natural courage.

The police officer had indulged in no figurative talk when he told the young man, some time before, that Ontario had a "killer." Men had been found cast on land, or still adrift, and they had died by violence. There was a killer. But where did he dwell?

Meditation stopped as a rustle at one side called for attention. Then a twig outside snapped sharply. Rainbar shifted his gaze and looked at the foot square opening that served as window.

Something like consternation followed. Dim as the light was he saw a human head framed in the opening. A spy was there!

This mysterious story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

FAULT OF THE MOVIES.

"I have already asked you three times, my dear, to pass the sugar, and you haven't even heard me," said Scuyler at dinner. "What is the trouble? You seem perturbed this evening."

"Not perturbed, but righteously indignant. That's what I am," replied young Mrs. Scuyler.

"Won't you tell me what did it?" Scuyler inquired sympathetically.

"You won't believe it when I tell you, Charley, but she gave a party—a lawn party—this afternoon and never invited me. So there!"

"Who did that awful thing?" demanded Scuyler.

"Mildred Carr did. The woman whom I considered my very best friend."

"Maybe it was just a little family gathering."

"Nothing of the kind. It was a big, pretentious affair. When I happened past there with Mrs. Gale in her automobile we saw with our very own eyes at least twenty people, talking and laughing and chatting. We didn't recognize any of them because we were too indignant even to take a second glance at the place. Such an insult from one whom I had loved as a sister!"

"Probably Mildred is going to have a series of functions and intends to ask you to the next party," remarked Scuyler.

"No matter how many parties Mildred Carr might give, I should expect to be at every one of them. I am her oldest and most devoted friend," Mrs. Scuyler stormed. "I suppose that because she has moved into a more aristocratic part of the suburb her old neighbors have become no longer good enough for her. She intends to drop us. That is what she does! It only took her about four weeks to forget how her husband and herself used to almost live at this house."

"I wouldn't worry," said Scuyler. "No doubt she will explain."

"Charles Scuyler, for pity's sake, don't always defend every one! There can be *no possible excuse for such an affront. I would not lower myself to listen to an* apology of any kind."

Scuyler pretended to regard the affair lightly, but the next evening Mrs. Carr called Mrs. Scuyler on the telephone and said:

"When my husband came home from downtown this evening he said that Mr. Scuyler looked so glum and glared at him so that he thinks your husband's business must be pretty poor these days."

"I thank you for your interest in Mr. Scuyler's affairs," frigidly replied the other, "but I assure you that his business has never been better."

"Maybe, then, he has a case of indigestion or dyspepsia or biliousness or something," suggested Mrs. Carr.

"I shall thank you and your husband not to concern yourselves," answered Mrs. Scuyler, and her tone was exactly as vinegary as her words.

"Well, you needn't get angry about it. What is the matter with you, anyway?"

"This sudden interest in our affairs seems quite remarkable under the circumstances," snapped Mrs. Scuyler.

"What do you mean? I don't begin to understand you. Please explain."

"It seems rather strange, to say the least, that you should be so concerned about people you don't even invite to your lawn party."

"My lawn party?" gasped Mrs. Carr. "I haven't had a party. Do you suppose for one minute I would give any affair without you, Inez Scuyler?"

"It certainly is strange. Maybe your memory is failing. I am absolutely sure I saw a party on your lawn yesterday afternoon and that——"

"Oh, oh, oh!" shrieked Mrs. Carr. "Now I understand. How droll! I'll tell you what that was. A moving-picture company asked me if they could use our grounds yesterday afternoon for a lawn party scene. Of course, I consented. That was the party you saw. I wasn't even at home, as I had an engagement in town. And you folks were insulted that you were not invited to my fete? That is a joke."

"I believe it is, and a joke on me, Mildred," laughed Mrs. Scuyler. "I'll run and explain to Charley and we will be right over."

* * *

The average man would rather visit a dentist than his wife's relatives.

THE DANGER LINE

Or, BANISHED TO BLANDFORD

By ERNEST A. YOUNG

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CHAPTER VI.

WHEN the blinding glare which accompanied the explosion faded away it left half a dozen wriggling tongues of flame along the floor and walls of the ruined mill. Some of these were extinguished in the draught of damp air, but two or three grew stronger, getting hold of splintered shreds from the sagging timbers and licking them up with a soft crackle. These little flames furnished some light of a sort that made the shadows perform a ghost dance, while a man whose face was blanched by a prison pallor crept from behind a partition and surveyed the scene with furtive, shifty eyes.

For the moment King, half-stunned, leaned against the wall. Zella Penlow had been thrown across the threshold and lay where she had fallen. She was not unconscious, but for the moment she was too weak from fright to rise. As the stranger looked down at her, he suddenly swooped upon a tiny flame which had seized upon the girl's cotton dress. With his bare hands he beat out and smothered the blaze.

"Who would have dreamed that skirts would be put in jeopardy?" he mumbled.

King passed his hand across his forehead, feeling of his singed eyebrows and a lock of hair which had been crisped by the burst of flame. At the same time the stranger took up a leaky bucket, ran to the rear end of the mill, filled it under the spouting water-gate, and set about quenching the fast kindling flames. He was deliberate and methodical about it, and the last flicker of blaze sizzled and expired while there was water remaining in the pail. Then he turned and dashed the last pint of it into the face of King.

"There, d—n ye, wake up!" he growled.

"Thunder!" spluttered King. He sprang farther back into the mill, tripped on a loose floor board, and fell heavily. Before he could get up the stranger was sitting astride his chest with fingers lightly pressing his windpipe.

"I wouldn't hurt you, not a mite," the man purred, "but you mustn't holler, and I want to make sure if you has a gun."

"I have a twenty-two toy in an inside pocket," King confessed. "If you aren't willing to allow a man so much protection in this devil's hole, why, take it, and welcome."

The stranger fumbled for the revolver, found it, turned it over in his hand. "A cunning little gun!" he chuckled. "Keep it, mister, since you seems to have skirts to protect. But don't make any mistake, for I has a bigger gun than yours, and I ain't standing for foolishness. I'm going to let you get up, but you wants to be careful. I has reason to be suspicious."

The stranger leaped to his feet like a circus performer. King arose more deliberately and saw Zella standing in a shrinking attitude in the doorway.

"Were you hurt, Miss Penlow?" King asked.

"Not so much as I was frightened," she answered.

King turned to the stranger, and for the first time marked the peculiar pallor of his face, which was clean-shaven, while his hair was close-cropped and eyes piercingly keen. This could be made out by the dim light of a lantern which the stranger had unearthed from some corner where it had been hidden.

"Well, who are you?" King demanded. "And what sort of a trick——"

"One question at a time, mister," the other interrupted. "If you are asking about the explosion, I'll tell ye true it was no trick, but just an accident. A can of gasoline, some of it spilled on the floor, and the match that you struck, with perfectly natural results. As for the name, I'll have to ask ye to be satisfied with what might be called a subterfugious one which will serve you to call me by, like a wooden handle to an iron kettle. Let me see. Wouldn't Ben Franklin answer as well as any name? Ye might shorten it either to Ben or Frank."

"It is as good as any name if you are in a situation that makes you afraid to give the name which belongs to you," said King.

The stranger shot a swift glance, first at the face of King, and then at the girl. Then he fumbled in a hip pocket. But he did not withdraw his hand.

"It's me for a question," he said, "and for you to answer on your honor. What was you two hiking down here so lively for? Did ye count on finding somebody hiding here?"

"She was running away from that brute up at the house, and I was trying to help her to escape," King answered.

"Sounds truthful," nodded the man. "You'll excuse my seeming fussy about the company I gets into. The original Ben Franklin was that way. Now, to meet facts with facts, let me say that I stole that can of gasoline and slopped some of it round in the mill for a purpose. But, upon me honor, I never dreamed that I was to put skirts in jeopardy."

Zella seemed to have recovered from her fright, but she looked at the stranger with suspicion.

"Did Horrocks send you down here to hide from officers?" she asked.

The man bowed with exaggerated politeness.

"May I ask who Horrocks might be?" he inquired.

"The crippled brute up at the house."

"I have not the honor of the gent's acquaintance," said Franklin. "I was shy at calling at any house. I sneaked around the lumber camp, and there I found an old pal of mine. He directed me to this old mill, saying it had the name of being haunted, and that nobody ever come here if they could help it. That was early this morning, and I've been sojourning here ever since. I found the gasoline, used, likely, by the people to run their automobile, and fetched it down here for a purpose, slopping some of it onto the floor, also for a purpose. I was mortal tired in the legs and have been asleep."

"Then you are not one of Horrocks' friends?" the girl persisted.

"Horrocks I know not," said Franklin. He solemnly raised his right hand, from which the thumb and little finger were missing. "To satisfy the skirts, I would solemnly swear the man called Horrocks, so far as I know, has never come into me life."

"Then," said Zella, with a sign of relief, "you can have no motive for betraying us to him or to any member of his gang."

"Not the slightest motive, miss. What is more, it would do me proud to stand in defense of skirts wheresomever I may find them in jeopardy. For more than two years, to speak the truth, me boarding place has been one where no skirts were allowed, and that makes me feel especial galiant. I'm rather out of training, but, such as I am, I stand ready to defend to the last drop of me blood any and all skirts that I may find in jeopardy."

"Some heroics," smiled King. "But we may need to put you to the test."

The man's face was not one to inspire confidence. His shifty eyes and mock-servile speech, with a slinking, dodging movement of the head and shoulders, branded him as a hard character. Besides, he had shown himself to be resourceful. There was a panther-like springiness about his movements and swing of his arms that suggested training in a prize ring.

"They seem to have failed to follow us in this direction," said Zella. She addressed the words to King. "But," she added, "it is certain that they will look for us here. At best, any hiding-place in this vicinity can be only temporary."

"I don't intend to tarry here long," said King. "But it was a quick shift for us just now. Hark! I hear the automobile."

The sound of the car with muffler wide open made a roar which could not be mistaken. King figured that Bryson had had trouble getting the machine out of the thicket, and that this was what had delayed the pursuit of Gridley and the other timber cutters.

"They will start scouring the place for us now," murmured Zella, again oppressed by her fear of Horrocks.

"Well, to come right down to it, Miss Penlow, what would be likely to happen if they found us?" King asked.

"That would depend upon Horrocks."

"He would probably try to force you to return to the house," reasoned King. "But would they actually have the nerve to try to detain me?"

"Yes, yes! Oh, sir, don't expect Horrocks to be afraid of consequences. They will stop at nothing. You little know what they have done already——"

She hesitated, seeming to listen. The night was still, and sounds from the direction of the house came down across the valley where the mill stood with wonderful distinctness. There was a confused murmur of voices audible from near the cluster of farm buildings, and above these sounded a loud, parrot-like screech that caused Zella to shiver with a terror which she could not resist.

"Bryson has told Horrocks about you, and he is in a more terrible rage than before," said Zella.

"We won't have a long respite in this place," King decided. "And once they locate us, will this be an easy crib to get away from?"

"As easy as any. If we had stayed near any one of the other buildings they would have found us before this."

Ben Franklin—to give the stranger the name he had chosen—had been listening and observing in silence, but with sundry shrugs of shoulders and grimaces. He wound up with a panther-like spring to the doorway of the mill, where he went thru a dumb show of delivering an upper-cut, a left-hand hook, and lastly a knock-out punch to an imaginary solar plexus. Then he faced his companions with his arms triumphantly folded.

"Thus," he proclaimed, "will I put out of the game any and all who may attempt to persecute the skirts!"

"If I could be sure you would make good on that score, Franklin," said King, looking the man squarely in the eyes, "I might find it possible to return the favor in a substantial way. Can I depend upon you?"

"Bank your money, mister," vowed the convict.

"Probably you have little to fear from Horrocks on your own account," said King. "But, on the other hand, I might in the finish be able to help you more than he could. Horrocks isn't going to last. In the final reckoning, Franklin, I might turn out the more helpful to you if it should come to a pinch."

A smile came and went like a flash across the countenance of the stranger. It was not the first time he had been approached diplomatically, as a neutral, where his services promised to be of value. He had no childlike faith in human nature.

"I has a pal down at the camp," the fugitive confessed, "but I ain't banking on him any great if it comes to a pinch. A deputy marshal comes along, shoves a roll of the long green under my pal's beak, and he peaches, my pal does. I knows the game."

The assurances of the shady stranger were not very convincing to King, but there was the bare chance that the convict might judge it to be for his own best interest to stand by the ones with whom his fortunes seemed to be thrown for the moment.

"Better to have him with us than against us," King whispered to his companion.

The sounds in the vicinity of the house had suddenly subsided. King seized the opportunity to explore the ruined mill with the aid of the lantern. Zella showed him the way about, keeping close at his side with a clinging confidence which revived his doubt as to whether she should be treated as a child or a woman. At first she had seemed to take it upon herself to guard and warn him against the dangers into which he had unwittingly plunged. But now she evidently had gained confidence in him, and was in turn trusting more and more to his judgment.

In silence they picked their way over the shaky floor and sagging timbers of the old mill. At intervals of two or three minutes the water-wheel would make a single revolution, its buckets filled by the leaking gate. While the big wheel creaked and groaned upon its bearings, the main shaft and pulleys running the length of the mill were made to revolve spectrally overhead. Then, as the machinery stopped, there would follow another interval of silence, broken only by the swish of the water leaking from the flume.

"Is there no way of getting out at the back of the building?" King asked.

"The main part of the stream cuts off retreat in that direction," the girl answered.

"Is there no way of crossing it?"

"There is a footway across the dam," Zella explained, "but the timbers are so rotten that it is unsafe with the water underneath pouring over the spillway."

"Couldn't it be crossed, at a pinch?" King persisted.

"I walked across once, by daylight, but I don't think it could be done at night. The wood is slippery with mold and slime, and the water roars over the rocks below."

"Just a last chance for a man of nerve," commented King, as they came back to the front end of the mill. There they found Franklin standing in the doorway, apparently doing sentinel duty. He made a sign of caution as they approached.

"Those people are up to something," he said, speaking in a whisper. "I think they have come halfway down here, and they're huddled there near a big apple tree. They're mighty quiet."

"I can see no sign of them," said King, after a prolonged look at the spot the other had indicated.

"There was one little flash of light a minute ago," explained Franklin, "and it was then that I glimpsed three or four persons in a huddle. It's infernally dark—begging pardon of the skirts—and it seems to be getting darker."

King had taken the precaution to extinguish the lantern before bringing it within range of the doorway. Now he stepped outside and crawled on hands and knees up the slope. He soon found that the stranger's warning was well founded, for he made out a number of shadowy forms moving about, and at the same time he caught the murmur of voices.

"They act like a crew of savages hatching up a heathenish trick," thought King.

At the same time he became conscious of the nearness of some one. It was Zella. "I'm afraid!" she whispered. "The fury of Horrocks, and his powers of evil invention are terrible. Somehow, Horrocks always wins in the end."

King drew one of her cold, trembling hands within his arm and held it protectingly. He felt the appeal of her helplessness where, in the beginning, she had impressed him by her self-reliance. She had begun by offering him her protection, and in a way he had been sorely in need of it. Now, having defied Horrocks in King's behalf, it was her turn to need the young man's guardianship.

The terror which she displayed impressed King with a sense of a sufficient cause in the diabolical personality of Horrocks. It was increasingly evident that the physical handicap of the cripple had developed in him the primitive cunning of a savage and the ferocity of a beast of prey. While remaining at the house Zella had to some extent been protected from the extreme tyranny of her stepfather. While face to face with him she had seemed defiant, almost contemptuous; but having fled from him and yielded in a measure to the impulse of fear, she seemed to abandon herself to a flood of terrified feeling which she had restrained for many months.

"We can't say Horrocks always wins in the end," King whispered in return, "until the end comes. I've never proved myself up yet, and I don't want to be over-confident; but there's just a chance, you know, that I may turn out a winner."

While he spoke King was watching a point of light which had moved about beyond what looked like a thicket near the large apple tree. Once the light flared up and then went out. Now it appeared again, like a newly ignited match. Suddenly the point seemed to spring into a vivid sheet of flame which lit up with noonday brightness the entire space between the farm buildings and the ruined mill. At the same instant the parrot voice of Horrocks broke upon the silence.

"Yonder is the spy and the traitor-cat!" he screamed.

CHAPTER VII.

IT WAS not merely a momentary flare which illuminated the sloping field and straggling orchard, the ruined mill and glimpses of the stream thru a tangled fringe of yellow birches and alders, but a steady bonfire that served the purpose of Horrocks like an immense torch. It was the malignant brain of the cripple which had hatched the scheme, simple enough in its way, but of telling effectiveness as a means of disclosing the hiding-place of the fugitives.

A heap of dry prunings from the apple orchard had been gathered, with dead leaves, and oil poured over the pile. The men had been about this work when King had discerned their flitting forms. The sudden ignition of the mass surely sprang a surprise, and while King was inclined to take the matter coolly on his own account, the terror of Zella did not fail to impress him. It was as if she comprehended unfathomed resources in the malignant brain of Horrocks which were undreamed of by those who knew less about him. She clung to the arm of her companion with a low, despairing moan. "We are lost, lost!" she kept repeating as King drew her hurriedly back to the sheltering darkness of the mill.

"Not quite that," he assured her. "There are only four of them in sight, counting Horrocks out, for he surely won't count when it comes to a run for cover."

"Charge after them!" croaked the cripple. "Make sure of the traitor-cat—I'll deal with her. And don't let the spy slip thru your fingers."

King had not believed that the followers of Horrocks would dare to attack him openly, for it did not seem possible that anything so high-handed would be attempted, even tho it were a remote locality in a rural town. But there might be real danger to Zella, and for her sake he wished to keep their enemies at bay until some sort of a compromise could be effected.

The four comrades of Horrocks started at a headlong dash down the slope. They were now in full view of the ones hiding in the mill. Two were members of the timber-cutting crew; the others were Bryson and Adam, the big half-wit. Adam was in the lead.

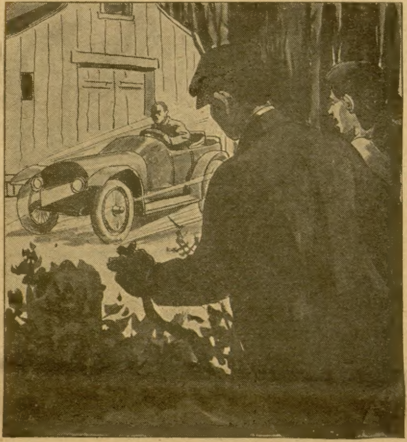
Franklin stood in the doorway of the mill, and at the moment King and Zella reached its shelter a flash, accompanied by a sharp report, lit up the face of the convict. Adam was seen to stumble, fall, get up again, and then stoop to rub his left shin with both hands, mumbling to himself.

"Franklin is the sort to use a last resort at the beginning," was King's muttered comment.

"Keep on! Keep on!" screeched Horrocks. But Adam was the only one to obey. Bryson, halting, called out:

"Come back, you idiot! Can't you see, the young chap has somebody with him, after all. There's no telling how many there are of them."

Adam pulled up, turned and limped back to where Horrocks was standing. The lumbermen had not waited for orders before beating a retreat.



Ben Franklin was at the wheel.

"That is just the sort of impression I am willing to make," said King, "tho it is giving me more credit than I'm entitled to. I'm willing to cast one more vote for Ben Franklin, for he has certainly scored when we needed the tally most."

"This is hoping," remarked the convict, "that me humble effort may gain me slight favor with the skirts."

"You couldn't have done better, Franklin," King assured him. "You have given them the impression that I have confederates concealed here, and they don't know how many. It may hold them off for a time."

"They had a line on ye up yonder," said the convict, "and we would have had them at close quarters if they hadn't been checked."

"I would like to ask, Franklin, if it was by good or poor marksmanship that you nipped that chap in the leg instead of hitting him in a more vital spot?"

"Were I disposed to boast," returned the other, "I might tell of experience with guns, short and long, breech and muzzle, where gunplay was common. But I will forbear. Only too well do I know the sorry consequences of the pastime."

"You made the big chap walk back with a limp."

"He will need a bandage on his left leg about four inches above the ankle joint. Not a serious matter," remarked the stranger as he slipped another cartridge into the cylinder from which the shell had been ejected.

"But Horrocks will not give up," Zella broke in. "He always wins in the end."

"Probably he will not give up at this stage of the game," King agreed. "Just the same, the audacity of Franklin will hold them back until we have time to decide upon our next move. Already the germ of a plan is developing in my not over-brilliant brain, and it is one in which Franklin may help us again, if he is willing."

"Anything to help protect the skirts," declared the convict, with a duck of his head.

"It is imperative that I find some means of getting Miss Penlow where she may be better protected while I attend to the business which brought me here," King continued. "There is something up yonder that I'm itching to get my hands on—I mean the steering gear of that racing car. With that we could leave Horrocks in the lurch and run the gantlet of the lumbermen's camp."

"Ah!" breathed Franklin, with another jerk of the head. Then he fell silent.

"If I can only get up to where Bryson left the car with the young lady while you, Franklin, work some kind of a ruse to hold the attention of the gang, we can make a quick getaway."

"Um-m!" mumbled the convict. And that was all.

King sensed for the first time unwillingness on the part of the one who had hitherto appeared eager to do anything to help Zella. "What is the objection?" King demanded.

"No objection. Anything in reason to help the skirts."

"When the blaze dies down couldn't you hold their attention while we tried getting to the machine by a detour?"

"I dare say I could," Franklin assented.

"Were you thinking out a plan?"

"Not exactly."

"Well, if you're really willing to do it, I must say you have a queer way of showing it," King exclaimed.

"Anything—anything—to help the skirts," stammered the convict.

Then a new thought flashed upon the mind of King. "I'm a dense one when it comes to wits," he exclaimed. "I have been considering only two persons in this plan of mine, leaving our friend out of it altogether, so far as benefits are concerned. We would be leaving him here to shift for himself against the crowd after he has excited their hostility by helping us. Forgive me, Franklin. We'll try and dope out a better scheme."

Franklin's reply to this suggestion was a grunt accompanied by another duck of his head. It occurred to King then that he may have been giving the man more credit than he deserved. "A professional crook can put up a pretty good face when it happens to be for his interest," he reflected. "The next moment he may turn on the ones he has pretended to befriend. I'll keep my eyes open."

King did not give up his plan for seizing the racing car, even tho the convict seemed little inclined to help in the trick.

The bonfire was dying down, but it still illumined a considerable space around it. Horrocks and his men had withdrawn to a little distance where they seemed to be huddled, probably engaged in a consultation. The shot from the mill, which they knew King was not in a position at the time to have fired, raised a new problem for them. The primitive craftiness of Horrocks must work out a new plan, for, as Zella kept saying, he was one who would never accept defeat. The serpentine movements of his body were matched by the indirect methods of his mind. These were often beyond the calculations of a normal and healthy intelligence.

The ingenuity of King had never been taxed in this way before; but it was fast coming up to meet the demand upon it. In the beginning he had taken the whole affair lightly. He had not even acknowledged to himself that there was a serious side to the situation. But now he realized that Horrocks was not to be reckoned with in the ordinary human way. He was a criminal, but he could not to be judged or dealt with like other criminals. Besides, he had gathered around himself individuals of varied characters, but all peculiarly fitted to carry out his will. Bryson, Gridley, Adam, each in his way was to be reckoned with.

King held a low-voiced conference with Zella. By the time the bonfire had subsided to a level patch of glowing embers they had decided upon a plan.

"I suppose we ought to speak to Franklin about it," said King.

"It is no more than fair after what he has done," Zella agreed.

"By all means," said the convict, when King suggested his decision. The man ducked his head hypocritically. "Do any way for the safety of the skirts. Count me out. We may meet again."

"Follow along, and if you manage right we can make the getaway together," advised King.

"Better that I stay behind and put up a bluff to hold the attention of the enemy," said Franklin. "It is me duty to do all in me power to preserve the skirts from jeopardy."

"As you prefer, Franklin. But don't do anything unless it seems to be necessary. If we are quick about it I think we will succeed in giving them the slip."

The pair stepped out of the mill just as the water-wheel made one of its periodic revolutions. It was so still that the whirring of the pulleys and the groaning of the big wheel might easily have been heard by Horrocks and his men up under the apple trees. Franklin at the same time brought out the lantern, and for an instant allowed the light to show. This was to make Horrocks and his men think that the ones hiding in the mill were still there.

It was darker than it had been earlier in the night. Once well away from the mill and among the straggling trees of the orchard, it was easy to make progress without danger of detection. The distance was longer because it was necessary to go around the edge of the old orchard. They came up opposite the barn which was used as a garage and approached it in a direct line. It was then that a startling sound broke upon the stillness.

It was the panting of a gasoline motor with wide-open muffler. It came from the front of the barn. King and his companion were close to the road, and they saw the Horrocks racer plunge past them with gathering momentum. Ben Franklin was at the wheel!

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Nerve.

Bishop Penhurst was talking, in Boston, about charity.

"Some charities," he said, "remind me of the cold, proud, beautiful lady who, glittering with diamonds, swept forth from a charity ball at dawn, crossed the sidewalk, and entered her limousine.

"A beggar woman whined at the window:

"'Could ye give me a trifle for a cup of coffee, lady?'

"The lady looked at the beggar reproachfully:

"'Good gracious!' she said. 'Here you have the nerve to ask me for money when I've been tangoing for you the whole night thru! Home, James.'

"And she snapped the window shut in the beggar's face indignantly."

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The Poppy Girl

Or, Daring the Bar Sinister

By Carroll K. Michener

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE old man finished his chant, left the kukui torches to flicker out at will, and went away solemnly toward the entrance.

"I had never read of urns being used by the old Hawaiians," I said, when we had joined him in the open air.

"They weren't—these were only a compromise. When I came back from college I wanted the bones gathered into a Christian grave, but Mokuhana made tragic objection. He still is a kahuna—a priest of the old religion."

We rested long on a grassy slope overlooking the city and remained silent, Azelie watching me closely. The evening cool caressed us, and the stars began to glitter thru the blue soon after the last of the sun's rays were gone.

"You will understand better, now," commented Azelie, when we had eaten the lunch of sandwiches and baked sweet potatoes produced from the thoughtfully prepared parcel Mokuhana carried. "You see," she continued, looking away sadly toward the lights that began to twinkle along the distant harbor front, "how impossible it is for you ever to marry the daughter of a pagan chief."

She turned to me earnestly.

"You must go—now. You must forget me. I am very human—you must not tempt me too far."

The thought stole over me for the first time that perhaps Azelie was right, and I hated myself for it. Those pagan urns with the black old heathen kneeling before them in semi-idolatry seemed to bring home the intense reality of the barrier—a bar that in the fair face and laughing beauty of Azelie was enchantingly concealed.

Perhaps if I were to go away for a time—perhaps my attachment for her was a bit infatuation—infatuation that time might discover to be a bond too frail——

I looked at Azelie and found her eyes upon me. There was a look of suffering in them, for she seemed to have read me thru and thru.

"Azelie!" I cried, with a feeling of mingled remorse and anger at myself. But she shrank from me as I tried to take her hands, and we arose, facing each other, each of us no doubt sheltering the secret conviction that this must be the end.

We spoke little on the long journey down the narrow, shrub-choked pathways that concealed themselves mistily in the playful moonlight. It was late when we reached home. Mokuhana toward the end of the journey manifested great impatience, and led us at a pace faster than we cared to follow. At last he muttered something in Hawaiian which Azelie did not seem to understand, and despite the fatigue of the long tramp he astonished us by darting off at a dog-trot and disappearing in the shadows to the right of the path.

Azelie's good night—rather, her intended farewell—was a simple handclasp. We said nothing. Somehow there seemed nothing to say. She went in quickly and closed the door, softly but still with a sort of finality.

As I turned out into the roadway from the gate a figure emerged from the shadows of a hedge and approached me.

"They're waiting for you," the man told me, without explanation or introduction, and I understood. The events of the afternoon had almost made me forget the evening's promised adventure. "There's a carriage for you down the road a bit," he continued. "We'll have to hurry."

CHAPTER XV.

THE harbor was astir with the departure of Winter's fishing fleet as I stepped aboard the launch of the United States revenue cutter, tugging impatiently at the line that held it to the wharf. One by one the gasoline sampans chugged past in a long line, toward the harbor entrance, showing an irregular cluster of red and green astern lights as they disappeared around the end of the breakwater.

"They're turning east," commented Malachart, as he watched them. "Must be fishing around the north coast of Maui."

It was nearly an hour before we got under way. We were waiting, Malachart explained, for Mansen and one of his men to join us.

Mansen glowered at me as he came aboard, and sank into one of the locker seats in the cabin. For what reason I could not fathom until Malachart began to question him.

"Was there any wireless message?"

Mansen nodded.

"Who got it?"

"Same Hawaiian that got the previous ones. An old fellow—wireless office didn't know him."

"Didn't you nab him?"

Mansen shrugged his shoulders wearily.

"We followed him. That is, we tried to. Wanted to unravel the whole game—and lost him for our trouble. He doubled back and forth down into the shipping district, never stopping or speaking to any one so far as we could see, and then over into the cane flats between here and the hills. That's where we lost him—or he lost us. We'd have had to use bloodhounds to get him out of that sugar cane."

"Well," mused Malachart, "the ship has either had a warning or the game is on as usual. We might as well take a chance. Let's be off."

We were soon gliding out past the lighthouse and the breakwater, meeting the long swells of the roadstead. All of us, I think, impelled perhaps by something deeper than curiosity, swept the sea for a glimpse of the fishing fleet. There was no sign of it, tho lights should have been visible to the eastward.

Malachart was astonished. He was certain the campans had turned eastward into the Oahu-Maui channel, and so were the rest of us.

"Must have doubled back to the west," muttered Malachart. "They'd have had just about time enough to round Barber's Point and get out of sight."

As we turned from the harbor channel Mansen produced a scrap of paper on which was the wireless message received by the Hawaiian, copied from the wireless office files. It consisted simply of a latitude and longitude reading, and the course of the launch was shaped toward the indicated position. The reading was almost the same as the memorable one of the ship's last voyage—the one that had brought me into this unlooked for adventure.

The wind freshened as the launch settled to a steady pace. We were about a mile off shore—just outside the reef—and the launch was none too steady for comfort in the deep-sea wash. I stood on the forward deck for a time, breathing deep of the salt air, and thrilling under the tonic of the salt spray that came reeling in gusts over the bow whenever the crest of a wave met it. The lights of Honolulu were slipping away astern on the port side. We were nearly abeam of that part of the beach where the Winter residence faced boldly out to sea.

CHAPTER XVI.

THAT I should have been the first to hear Azelie's warning cry is another of those coincidences that have so closely linked our destinies. I don't know that her voice alone would have been sufficient to identify the white figure silhouetted against the deep jet of the waters, but she had been in my thoughts as we skirted the shore fronting her home. I had not the least doubt but that the cry was hers. I shouted frantically to the helmsman as I made out the outline of her canoe and saw that it was not moving but was directly in the course of the launch. The helmsman was too late, and tho the launch swerved slowly under his wheeling, its headway carried it swiftly to the smaller craft's doom.

Azelie stood calmly in the prow of the canoe—I was amazed that she had made no effort to paddle out of the way—and dived just as the launch struck. She came up almost instantly, and grasped the life-buoy that I tossed to her.

The crash and my shouts had brought every one on deck. The launch slowed down, and then put about in a circle to the spot where the wrecked canoe bobbed in our wake. Azelie was swimming toward us, pushing the life-buoy ahead of her, and half a dozen arms were extended to pull her up over the side of the launch.

She gazed at me for a moment in the utmost amaze, and then accepted the situation without question. The sea wind whipped her wet garments about her and she shivered.

"Shall we pick up your canoe, miss?" the petty officer inquired.

"No," she replied. "It was done for, anyhow."

"You'd better come down into the cabin," urged the petty officer, and his thoughtfulness roused us from our stupefied inaction. We rummaged the lockers for dry clothing, but found nothing save bathing suits, a gray tweed golf outfit belonging to the captain of the revenue cutter, and a long ulster.

Azelie accepted the ulster gratefully, rejecting the rest with a smile.

"You'd better change those wet clothes—you'll be far more comfortable," urged Malachart. "Here, all you fellows. Clear out of here. This cabin is now a ladies' boudoir. On deck, every one of you."

"No, thank you," said Azelie. "It's only for a few minutes. I can get into a carriage as soon as you put me ashore."

"You had better put them on," replied Malachart, soberly. "It will be some time before we can land. I'm sorry—very sorry—but just now we're in a tremendous hurry."

Azelie looked at him keenly but without question. I have often wondered at this capacity of hers to accept circumstances and to repress curiosity. I am not sure but that she has some sort of second sight that gives her power to read the riddles of perplexing situations and adapt herself to them. Without a word, but meeting slowly and quizzically the steady eyes of Malachart, she took the clothing he held out for her and waited for us to withdraw.

In an incredibly short time Azelie reappeared, the ulster, buttoned about her chin, revealing little of the masculine nature of her attire save the golf stockings that now were tucked oddly into her sea-soaked slippers. Her hair, still damp, was tucked away under a golf cap that left only a few unleashed strands of it to be whipped about her cheeks.

"You are wondering, of course," she said to us, "what sort of a madcap trick it was for me to be taking a midnight cruise in an outrigger canoe. But it's all very simple—I came out to meet the fishing fleet."

"To meet the fishing fleet!" exclaimed Malachart. "Why, the sampans sailed west."

The girl shook her head, and they stood looking at each other in surprise. Malachart searched the sea to the eastward for lights, but saw none, and turned to the girl again inquiringly.

"Oh, I understand," she murmured. "They carried no lights. I didn't notice it at the time. I——"

She paused suddenly and looked at Malachart. There was suspicion in his

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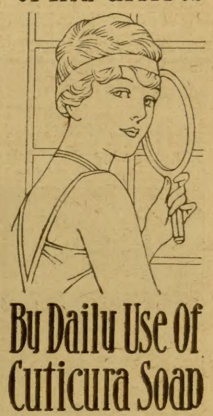

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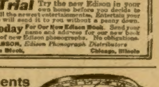

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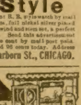

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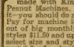

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eyes, and a sort of fearsome perplexity in hers.

"What was your idea in coming out to the fleet?" inquired Malachart, rather furtively.

"I—I brought——" began the girl, uncertainly, and then became silent—a sort of knowing, frightened silence. She recovered her composure in an instant and went on, disregarding Malachart's question and her own unfinished answer. "I often come out at night to see the fleet go by, and to talk to the fishermen. Mokuhana had taken the koa canoe this time—I don't know where he's gone with it—and there was nothing left for me but the malihini canoe. We call it that because it's not a dugout, you know, but made of pine boards. It hadn't been used for a long time and was like a sieve. I managed to keep it bailed out until the sampans came along, but when I started back the water seemed to come in faster. It was badly built. I think my weight must have widened the cracks in the uncalked boards. At any rate I had no time to paddle. It was all I could do to keep the crazy old thing from going down. The sampans had gone on, then, and I began to think there was nothing for it but to swim. I was about to take off my shoes and skirt and leave the treacherous craft when I saw your light."

"I had no idea," she resumed, turning to me, "that you would be on the launch. Of course, how could I? It's altogether too much like the story books. But here you are. And now isn't it your turn to explain? I've had my little say—what's yours?"

Without quite seeming to understand the girl's question, nor quite to ignore it, Malachart suggested going below for the coffee that was waiting for us in the launch's thermos locker.

That luncheon, an hour or two before dawn, in the tiny cabin of a seagoing launch that was being tossed riotously in the choppy channel between Oahu and Molokai, was the oddest I ever attended. It would have seemed unreal enough without the presence of Azelie, but with her there, pouring the coffee, and inquiring, "One or two lumps?" as if we were on her own lanai, made it absolutely visionary.

Azelie and I were left alone in the cabin when we had finished, the others lighting pipes and going on deck—to keep from getting drowsy, they said. For a few moments we looked at each other in silence, and then an expression of utter forlornness came over her face. I think she felt then, as she must have felt often in her strange life, her great aloneness.

There was suspicion in my mind—suspicion of Winter that had long been growing upon me, and now a suspicion that perhaps even Azelie knew or surmised something of the object of our quest and feared the outcome of it. Perhaps she had not been entirely frank in explaining the reason for her unexpected presence in the drifting canoe.

CHAPTER XVII.

AT THE first hint of dawn Malachart came down to tell us that the fishing fleet was dimly visible only a mile or two ahead. We were not far from the wirelessed position of the opium ship. The vessel had passed us an hour earlier, slowly rounding Makapu. The sampans were running slightly to the south of the ship's course, beating up against a strong northeast wind.

"Not much doubt about my theory now, is there?" called Mansen, who was watching the sampans thru his glass, visibly elated.

"We haven't anything on them yet," cautioned Malachart. "This might be one of their fishing grounds, you know."

But Mansen, who had been looking for more than sampans, at last gave a shout, and directed our attention to a tiny red flag that seemed to be fixed to the very floor of the sea, supported upon nothing.

"That's it!" cried Mansen. "That's one of them! It's the opium, ready to be picked up. Now, watch them."

The launch had not been driven at full speed, but as we neared the sampans our pace increased, and we began rapidly to overhaul them. Partly, I suppose, because those on watch in the fishing fleet were intent upon spying out the tiny red flags, as we now were doing, and partly because we were not outlined as they were against the red dawn, the launch apparently was not observed until we had nearly overtaken them.

As we watched suddenly one of the sampans darted away from the main fleet to pick up the first of the flags. Some one on this sampan caught sight of us, and there was almost immediate commotion on board the others as the discovery was signaled to them.

The launch was going at full speed now, and we forged rapidly into the midst of the somewhat scattered fleet. We scanned thru our glasses the faces of the men on board each sampan as we passed. Only Japanese fishermen were visible, stolid and apparently unconcerned. Malachart shouted an inquiry to the men on the nearest of the sampans, but an unintelligent grin on their faces was the only response.

"Wonder which is the flagship," muttered Malachart, with indecision. "No use trying to capture 'em all. The leader is the one we want."

Azelie, without comment, pointed to the sampan that had left the main fleet to pick up the first of the opium floats.

"How do you know?" queried Malachart, sharply.

"It's the only one with an ensign," was Azelie's reply.

She was right. We could see a rain-washed ensign floating from the detached sampan. Even as we gazed at it a Japanese sailor began to pull it in hastily, evidently to efface the boat's telltale individuality. The reason instantly was apparent. The sampan began moving off rapidly toward the northern coast of Oahu, and at a signal from it the others scattered, heading away from us in all directions like the points of an exploded star-bomb. It was a clever ruse. At least all but one would be able to elude pursuit. There were sixteen of them, and the chance of our catching the fleet captain, therefore, was just one in sixteen.

Malachart studied the situation for only a moment, then gave a quick order to the petty officer, and we soon were leaving a boiling wake as we turned at full speed after the lone sampan. We slowed once to pick up one of the tiny red-bannered floats that the fishing boats now were in too much of a hurry to notice.

"Exhibit A," muttered Malachart, grimly, as it was being hauled aboard.

Tho I said nothing of it, I saw that it was like the queer contraption Mokuhana had been at work upon that day in the little workshop at the Winter house, after the adventure with the shark. Azelie saw, too, and I fancied she turned a bit whiter under the pallor that showed in her face against the morning light.

Our quarry evidently was the fastest boat in the fleet. It was difficult to tell

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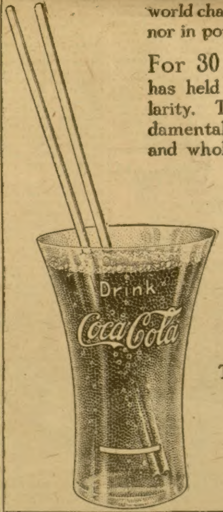

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at first whether we were gaining or losing. The sampan had a good start, and we had lost a little time in picking up the float.

"They're heading north of Makapu," declared the petty officer. "They must be trying to make the Rabbit Island landing."

For over an hour we fought the battle of speed, gaining almost imperceptibly upon the fleeing sampan. The sun came up over the rim of the sea, changing the first gorgeous silver and gold of the dawn to a blaze of splendor. The shifting colors, merging and developing almost as rapidly as if they were the creations of a master electrician turning up the lights in a great theater, furnished us a spectacle that for a time almost succeeded in drawing our minds from the excitement of the chase.

The sun was well up, and we were not more than a mile off shore, where the volcanic headlands gleamed bronze and flinty in the yellow light, before we drew within speaking distance of the sampan. No one but Japanese sailors was visible. We shouted for them to stop, threatening to shoot unless instantly obeyed, but the only response was the disappearance of the whole crew except the helmsman, whose head bobbed up at intervals to take bearings, and as quickly bobbed back again.

Malachart, the two secret service men, and the petty officer had revolvers. At a word from Malachart they fired into the air simultaneously and then waited. There was no sign from the sampan. So they began firing deliberately, calling attention more forcibly to their demands by splintering up the decks over the heads of the crew. Even this brought no apparent result, until suddenly there arose a sound of commotion aboard the sampan—the clatter of a struggle. From below decks emerged a disheveled figure—a white man—brandishing a revolver. There was a look of pallid frenzy in his disordered features.

"Father!" sobbed Azelie, catching my arm and gazing in terror at the madman who faced us on the sampan. "Oh, why didn't I tell you. Why couldn't I have confessed it was father I brought out in the canoe?"

We heard her, but were not impressed. The revelation came too late. We had suspected her long before—and forgiven the palpable concealment that had been prompted by a daughter's loyalty to her father.

The figure on the sampan, so near now that we were able to see the unhallowed blazing of his eyes, seemed to grow suddenly calm. Then his revolver, leveled suddenly at arm's length, flashed at us, and before we could recover from our surprise he had emptied its chambers. The first bullet crashed thru the glass of the wheelman's lookout, and we heard him cry out and fall heavily. All but one of the others went wild, and that one found a tingling, numbed target in my right arm. I grasped Azelie, and half pulled, half carried her toward the cabin. As I did so Malachart fired, and I saw the figure of the madman spin grotesquely and crumple to the deck.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE launch had been headed so that in a few moments it would draw up alongside the sampan, but when the helmsman was struck he must have clung to the wheel, pulling it far over to starboard, so that before we knew what was happening the launch was sweeping in a wide circle away from the sampan.

Azelie would not remain below, so together we watched the remainder of the drama. The petty officer jumped to the wheel, but before he could bring the launch about a shout from Malachart drew attention again to the sampan. No one on either boat apparently had noticed how close to shore we had drawn in the miniature naval engagement. As we looked, now, we saw the Japanese crew of the sampan make a sudden effort to change its course. They were too late, for when the craft was but half-turned to escape the coral reef, the sound of submerged rocks tearing at the side of the boat came to our ears. A swell, breaking against the reef at that instant, lifted the sampan and brought it down with a rending crash upon the jagged barrier.

It was plain that the craft was doomed, yet we were powerless to give aid. We dared approach no nearer to the reef, and had great difficulty indeed in checking our course soon enough to save the launch from a fate similar to that of the sampan. If the fishing boat remained where it was it must soon be dashed into splinters. If it drifted free it must almost immediately sink.

In the commotion into which the Japanese crew was thrown by the wreck no notice had been taken of Winter's body. It lay where he had fallen, an inert heap.

We stood by as close as we dared go, waiting for the final issue. A good many of the men, we thought, might manage to swim to the launch. The sailors had life-buoys ready and all the rope ends available.

Azelie was the first to notice the approach of a canoe from the shore.

"Look!" she cried. "An outrigger."

It is a barren coast, and we had not looked to it for aid. Yet here, truly enough, was opportune deliverance. The canoe came rapidly, forging thru the breakers under the powerful stroke of its single occupant. As he neared, Azelie clutched my arm excitedly and whispered:

"It's Mokuhana. See—his gray hair."

"Yes," I answered. "How in the world did he get here? He must be one of your old gods, capable of reincarnating himself whenever and wherever he wills."

"I don't know," she answered, shaking her head. "I don't know."

Azelie had not taken her hand from my arm, and at that moment she must have noticed a strange moisture in the coatsleeve. At any rate she held up the arm suddenly, and with a cry beheld it drenched in blood.

"You were hit!" she gasped, her bosom heaving. "You're covered with blood. Why didn't you tell me?"

The truth was I had almost forgotten in the sting of the excitement. The suspense of the situation had sort of anesthetized the wound.

I saw no more of what occurred, for Azelie had me in the cabin instantly, and set about washing and dressing the wound. While she worked the helmsman, whom every one seemed to have forgotten, stumbled down the gangway in a dazed manner, his face covered with streamlets of blood that had trickled down from a wound in his scalp. I examined it with my free hand, and found that the bullet had but grazed his temple, striking hard enough, however, to render him momentarily unconscious. As for me, the wound was a clean perforation, the bullet having gone thru the flesh of the upper arm without striking bone or artery.

"Azelie," I commanded firmly, when she had finished with me and I had kissed the hands that had dressed the wound. "Tell me—what was Mokuhana doing here?"

She went on for some time with her work of tearing her discarded petticoat into strips suitable for bandaging the sailor's head, without speaking. But at last she said:

"I'm not sure— I can only guess. Probably you would guess the same thing. Father had a dairy farm on this side of the island—or rather, I have, tho I've never seen it. Every week Mokuhana goes over to bring butter into market. He takes it to a Chinese merchant on Alakea street. Usually he brings it over the Pali on burros, but this time he must have been towed over in his canoe by the sampans and dropped at Makapu Point."

"Ah, I see. I understand better, now. Malachart will be interested in knowing how that 'butter' finds its way into Honolulu, and who is the Chinese merchant who gets it."

Judging from the sounds on deck the work of rescue was progressing satisfactorily. The outrigger was bumping gently against the side of the launch, and we could hear directions shouted for lifting some one on deck. A moment later, with great tramping of feet on the companionway, the limp figure of Mr. Winter was carried into the cabin.

Azelie stood with her hands clenched before her and looked into the sickly pallor of her father's face. She who had been so efficient in dressing my wound now seemed incapable of movement. Her attitude was almost cataleptic as she continued to gaze fixedly at the waxlike mask. It was an expression that stirred my memory. I thought of the night in the San Francisco opium den, when I found her staring with helpless fascination and horror at the face beyond the screen. The fancy grew as I looked from her eyes to the object of their regard. The face there on the cabin floor, moving helplessly with the roll of the vessel, was the drug-steeped face that had leered stupidly at her from the smoking-room of the opium den. That face, to which she had so feared to give recognition, was the face of her father.

Malachart advanced into the room to examine the limp body.

"He's not dead," was his verdict. "It's only a slight wound. The old Hawaiian is going ashore for one of the plantation doctors as soon as he's got those Japs off the sampan."

It was more than half an hour before the doctor arrived. Our first aid efforts in the meantime had been ineffectual in restoring Winter's consciousness, tho we were able to stop the flow of blood. The doctor was puzzled.

"The wound is not serious," he said. "But he has no vitality. If the assumption were not too much out of place in this case—considering the identity of the patient—I should say his trouble was opium."

The doctor looked inquiringly at each of us for confirmation or denial. Then Malachart told him, briefly, the story of the revolver duel, and of Winter's apparent madness.

"An unusual demonstration, perhaps, for an opium user," commented the physician, "but not impossible. Very likely he had been roused out of an opium stupor. Perhaps that was his purpose in going out with the fishing crew—to indulge in the habit without fear of detection by his friends or family."

The doctor administered a heart stimulant and waited for its effect. Under its influence Winter's eyes opened, then closed wearily. When he reopened them and stirred with a moan, he caught sight of Azelie as she stood by his side. There was a pause while he appeared to be struggling for mastery of his vitiated faculties.

"I'm done for," he whispered hoarsely. "I've got—something to say."

His eyes seemed to burn into Azelie's as he struggled to go on.

"You—you're not—not my daughter," he gasped. "You're not——" His eyes roved from hers and he caught sight of me. Instantly a change came into his face. There was a glint of malice in the eyes that were losing their living luster. After a moment of almost leering silence he closed his eyes and turned away from me—turned away from the entreating figure of Azelie. He would not speak again, tho Azelie, trembling, knelt by his side, questioning him, stroking his gray temples.

"Who am I—oh, what am I?" she sobbed, as she bent over him, her tears dropping unheeded, pitifully, upon the gray mask of his waxening face.

This remarkable story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

His Wise Decision.

Two ladies who contended for precedence at the court of the Emperor Charles V. appealed to that monarch to decide which one was entitled to the honor.

"Let the elder go first," said the Emperor.

He was never troubled with such a dispute again.

Iron Is Greatest of All Strength Builders, Says Doctor

A Secret of the Great Endurance and Power of Athletes

Ordinary Nuxated Iron Will Make Delicate, Nervous, Rundown People 200 Per Cent. Stronger in Two Weeks' Time in Many Cases.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Most people foolishly seem to think they are going to get renewed health and strength from some stimulating medicine, secret nostrum or narcotic drug, said Dr. Sauer, a well known Specialist who has studied widely both in this country and Europe, when, as a matter of fact, real and true strength can only come from the food you eat. But people often fail to get the strength out of their food because they haven't enough iron in their blood to enable it to change food into living matter. From their weakened, nervous condition they know something is wrong but they can't tell what, so they generally commence doctoring for stomach, liver or kidney trouble or symptoms of some other ailment caused by the lack of iron in the blood. This thing may go on for years, while the patient suffers untold agony. If you are not strong or well, you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while, double their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated like nuxated iron if you want it to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete or prize-fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray, while many another has gone down to inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron.

NOTE.—Nuxated Iron recommended above by Dr. Sauer is not a patent medicine nor secret remedy, but one which is well known to druggists and whose iron constituents is widely prescribed by eminent physicians everywhere. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy, in nearly all forms of indigestion, as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The Manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent or over in four weeks' time provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all good druggists.

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The Criminal Investigator

By Harry Stephen Keeler

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

CALLAHAN'S face assumed an air of utter blankness. He made several attempts to speak, but each time apparently thought better of it and remained silent. Jarrick looked wearily out of the window for a few seconds, and then went on with his explanation.

"Yes, the machinery that caught Mrs. Hunter was set in motion by Henry Jensen. He——"

"Was this Jensen a confederate, then?" asked Stillwell..

"An unconscious one, yes," returned Jarrick. "He entered the case in the following manner: Henry, you see, had answered a number of advertisements for help in the Chicago Sunday Tribune. But he had only sufficient stamps to mail part of them, for McClintock and I saw the balance of the letters lying on his bureau, together with the blank gummed strip that accompanies the outer row of postage stamps on every stamp sheet. So he decided to mail the most likely ones, and carry the other bunch down to the Tribune office today, in spite of the fact that those replies which come in the office late usually prove unproductive as far as jobs are concerned.

"Now, an inspection of yesterday's advertising section of the Sunday Tribune shows a number of promising 'help-wanted' advertisements, including some calls for pharmacy apprentices. By dint of going down to the Tribune office I managed to get an interview with the advertising manager." Jarrick turned to Callahan. "Chief, do you remember when he telephoned to you, asking you who Copelin Jarrick was?"

Callahan nodded.

"Well, together we ran thru the boxes CD991 and CD999, which were the receptacles for two promising blind ads for druggists' assistants. Sure enough, there was a reply from Henry Jensen in each box, for his handwriting is so Spencerian that no one could possibly mistake it. And his envelopes, too, are rather long and narrow. Each of those replies, however, was postmarked: Lincoln Park substation—7:25 p. m. The printed card affixed to the nearest mail box to the Devonshire—the one at North State and Division—shows that a new Sunday mail schedule is being tried out in that district. It announces Sunday collections at 5, 6:30 and 10:30 p. m., instead of the former one at 10:30 only.

"The postoffice, however, tells me that the 5 o'clock Sunday collections in this North Side district are taken direct to the Kinzie street substation in order that the eastbound mail can be put on a special New York mail train. So how simple the movements of Henry Jensen become, in view of the postmark on those two letters. Each of them, you see, must have been posted after 5 o'clock and before 6:30 in order to have the stamp of the Lincoln Park substation for 7:25 p. m.

"At any rate, I shall make the claim that Henry walked out of the Devonshire at around 6:15 p. m.—in order to mail those want-ad replies that bore stamps. But, as it happens, he had turned over his worn Yale key to Mrs. Tissenden several days before, with a request for a new one. And she had never provided him with one yet. So what did he do? Rather than become a nuisance to Lilywhite, he performed the operation known as 'fixing the catch.'

"In other words, he stood in the open doorway, showing plainly against the hall light, pressing back the spring lever of the Yale lock, and depressing the locking button. But X saw all this. And he took it all in. And having already learned from across the street that there was now but one occupant of the top-floor front room, he lost no opportunity of walking into the house unobserved. Once inside, he proceeded upward floor by floor, taking matters very cautiously, I imagine, and remaining in readiness to ask for the landlady if any one should catch him prowling around.

"But what was going on during this trip of X, with his heavy duplicate satchel in his hand? Simply this: McClintock was down in the 'phone booth, talking. Mrs. Hunter was across from McClintock's room, washing her hands in the tiny washroom. And McCracken, here, was exchanging the satchels, taking the original one containing the gold ingot and leaving the one with the package of soldering sticks.

"By the time X had reached the top floor, however, McCracken was safely out of the window and Mrs. Hunter had returned, closed the door behind her, and settled down in the rocker, absolutely unaware that anything had transpired during her absence.

"So X reached the top hallway, tiptoed along it as far as the door of the front room, and stopped. Probably he tried to peep thru the keyhole, but was unsuccessful on account of the key being on the inside. But there was a much more perfect means of looking into the room; and that means, I take it, he seized upon.

"Built into each door of the Devonshire is a slot, carrying a hinged cover and leading into a wire basket on the inside of the door. This is used, of course, as a means of distributing the mail three times a day without disturbing the occupants of the room. If X lifted up that cover and peeped in, he must have seen a tantalizing sight. In full view on the bureau was the black satchel that contained, so far as he knew, what he was searching for. Was it a Z-ray machine to him, do you think? Or was it a mass of pure gold worth $10,000? At any rate, there wasn't a soul in the room but an elderly lady, sitting in a rocker about two feet from the door with her back to him.

"Now if X had gone to all this trouble, we must assume that he was prepared for other emergencies. Was he armed? I doubt it, so far as actual firearms are concerned. But I believe that he was prepared for two contingencies: First, the crafty exchanging of those valises, if the original were set down in the street by either Vandersloan, or more likely by the party that Vandersloan would negotiate with; and second, the actual rendering helpless of his victim if no other way should offer. So what did he do, chief?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Callahan, wearily. "If he opened the door and walked in, he would have been running chances of raising a scream from her and alarming the house. Under her nervous tension I doubt if he could have put over such a stunt as that. You've asked me a question, Jarrick, and I've given you practically a question for a reply."

For the first time, Foley, one of the

(Continued on page twelve.)

Concentrated Satisfaction

A great many former users of tea and coffee have learned that there is a pure food beverage made from wheat, which has a delightful flavor.

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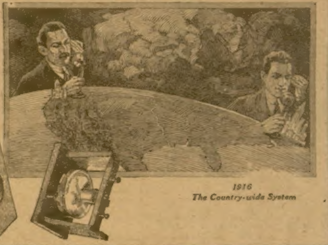

Forty-one Years of Telephone Progress

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The original instrument—the very first telephone in the world—is shown in the picture above.

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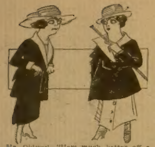


Mr. Oldwed—"How much better off a man would be if he would take his wife's advice."

Mrs. Newwed—"Yes; I have told Tom time and time again not to bet on poker hands that don't win, and yet he does it."

His Wife's Name.

A big, elderly English farmer called on a solicitor and said he'd like to make his will. "I'll leave my brass to the wife," he said; "we've been married thirty years."

The solicitor prepared to receive particulars. "What's your wife's Christian name?" he asked.

The farmer scratched his head, thought, scratched his head again. No, he couldn't remember. Hanged if he knew at all.

The solicitor thought of a ruse. "Walk to that door," he suggested, "and call upstairs as if you're calling her."

The farmer did so. He called out, "Missus!"

Her Little Ruse.

"Harry," cooed the young mother sweetly to her husband, "I am beginning to think the baby really looks like you."

"Are you, dear?" said hubby, with a pleased grin.

"Yes, I seem to see it more and more every day, and I'm so glad!"

"Do you really want him to look like me, darling?" asked the proud father, tenderly.

"Yes, of course I do, silly!" was the lady's fond reply. "And I get more sorry every day that we didn't give him your name."

"Little sweetheart," gurgled hubby, "you don't know how happy you make me when you say that."

"Well, it's quite true," said wifey, ruffling his hair. "And, Harry, dear, I saw the loveliest hat today; I've never had one that suited me so well. It's 35 shillings. Do you think I ought to spend so much as that on a hat, dear?"

He Had Proved It.

A teacher was examining a class of small boys in arithmetic. Addressing a particularly smart boy, she asked:

"Can five go into one?"

"Yes," came the answer at once.

"You stupid boy!" she said. "How do you make that out?"

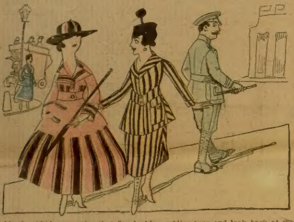
"Please, ma'am," he said, "I put five toes into one stocking this morning!"

Had Been Married Before.

In this city they are telling of a widower who was married recently for the third time, and whose bride had been married once before herself.

The groom-elect wrote across the bottom of one of the wedding invitations sent to a particular friend:

"Be sure to come; this is no amateur performance."



Maude—"Did you notice that fine-looking soldier turn and look back at me?"

Vera—"Yes. Isn't it surprising how little it takes to turn a man's head?"

The Grateful Farmer.

A collector of subscriptions for the brass band fund once came across a farmer who was noted for his meanness. To his surprise the farmer at once consented to subscribe fully as large a sum as any he had yet received.

"Mr. Hardfist," he said, addressing the farmer, "you are surely very fond of music, to give so much."

"Oh, yes," said the farmer; "they're grand for scaring the crows from ma 'taties when they're practicin', an' I'm grateful."

Had Tried It.

"So you're leaving to get married, Mary?"

"Yes, mum."

"And how long have you known the young man?"

"Three weeks, mum."

"Isn't that a rather short time? Don't you think you should wait until you know him better?"

"No, mum. I've tried that several times, and every time the man changed his mind when he got to know me better."

Saving His Excuses.

"How would you like to go with me on a fishing trip in a few weeks?" the fat plumber asked his friend, the thin carpenter.

"I'd like it all right," the carpenter returned, "but I am afraid it is out of the question."

"Why?"

"I couldn't think of an excuse to give my wife for going out of town at this time."

"Haven't you any good excuses at all?"

"Yes, but I don't want to use them just now."

"Why not?"

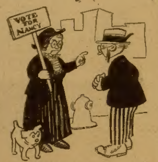
"Well, to tell the truth, I am saving them up for house cleaning time."

Did Him No Good.

"Jinks put all his property in his wife's name to keep his creditors from getting it."

"That was a mean trick."

"Not only that, but it didn't do him any good. His wife eloped with one of the creditors!"



Mrs. Henrietta Peck—"Is it true that you've been telling your friends that I'm an inhuman creature around the house?"

Her Husband—"Something like that, my dear. I said you were a divine creature."

His Twin Brother.

"Johnny," said the office manager, "there's a vacancy on the staff, and I rather thought of giving the place to your twin brother."

"Twin brother, sir!" echoed the office boy.

"Yes; the one I saw at the baseball game when you were attending your grandmother's funeral last Wednesday," said the chief, smiling grimly.

"Oh—ah—er—um—yes," said Johnny. "I'll go and fetch him!"

"That's right," said the manager; "and don't you come back till you've found him!"

Johnny is still looking for his twin brother.

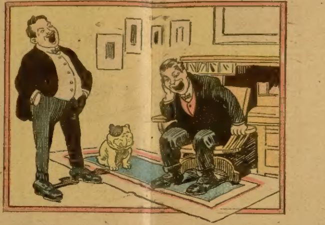
Very Brave.

Bertie FitzSwanker took his latest charmer out motoring one day recently, and, feeling that, perhaps, she regarded him as a coward for not being in uniform, determined to show his pluck.

If he could not face the Germans, he could at least defy the local police; so he sank back in his seat and made that car travel.

"We are going fifty miles an hour, darling!" he yelled presently. "You don't seem alarmed. You are very brave."

"Yes, dear," gasped the sweet little maid, swallowing another peck or so of dust; "I'm full of grit!"



Questioner—"I understand you are a humorist; can you tell me the funniest sight that you have ever seen?"

Humorist—"Yes, sir, I can. It was a man trying to pump up a solid rubber tire."

His "Touching Way."

Dr. Max Starkloff says a friend who had a reputation for a very "touching way" met him recently and said:

"Look here, doctor, I'm terribly mortified about not having paid back that dollar I borrowed from you last June, but honestly, old man——"

"Oh, that's all right," said Starkloff. "Don't speak of it."

"Oh, but I must speak of it," said the fellow. "I can't treat a friend that way, you know, and I—I want to pay you and I will, doctor—sure thing. If you will lend me $2 I'll pay that dollar right this minute and we can start the new year fresh."

Things Have Changed.

Mary, a small but up-to-date maiden, had been to tea for the first time with the new neighbors next door. And, from all accounts, the little girl there had not been at all generous in permitting Mary to share her playthings.

"Well," said Mary's mother, when she had heard all about it, "if anybody had treated me like that when I was a little girl, I would have come straight home."

The girl of today shrugged her small shoulders, as she answered:

"Umph! Things have changed since your day, mother. I slapped her face and stayed."

Always in the Distance.

"Money talks, you know, and——"

"You may be right," acknowledged the discouraged-looking man. "I have not for a long time been able to get near enough to it to know whether it does or not. I sometimes see it in the distance making derisive gestures at me, but that is about as far as my acquaintance with it goes."—Judge.

A Terrible Slight.

"What do you think? A man brought back the umbrella he took from our hall stand!"

"H'm! It speaks well for the honesty of the man, but it's a terrible slight to the umbrella."

A Warning.

"One minute to change the reel."

Thus read the customary sign.

"Why do you flash that sign?" inquired a friend of the movie magnate. "Everybody knows that it takes a minute to change the reel."

"It isn't that. It's to give loving couples a chance to unlock hands."

A Heavy Load.

Two men were complimenting their habits of temperance.

"Did you ever, neighbor," said one, "see me with more than I could carry?"

"No, indeed," was the reply, "but I have seen you when I thought you had better gone twice after it."

Diplomacy.

"Old [illegible] says that since he made his pile of money he feels like a neutral nation."

"Why is that?"

"Because he has so many diplomatic relations."—Judge.

Identifying Him.

Ordinary concerts have grown rather stale in Middleton, where everybody sings, or thinks he can.

So a novelty was arranged, in which each performer was to appear in a fancy dress and sing a suitable song. The first items went off very well, altho when Miss Antike came on in a simple, girlish gown and sang "For Ever and for Ever" the audience got nervous, and thought she meant to do so.

Then the village crier appeared in a sailor rig and declaimed "Asleep on the Deep" in a voice high-pitched and cracked.

"Who is he?" "What character does he represent?" were the questions the listeners asked each other wildly.

Then came the usual voice from the rear of the hall, saying:

"Why, 'e's Sing-Bad the Sailor."

The Manager's Order.

It is on the country circuit, and the audience is sadly lacking in appreciation of the efforts of the actors.

Catcalls and groans, vegetables and eggs are directed at the stage, but still the well-meaning performer, who is in the midst of a long monolog, continues to recite his lines.

Finally a despairing spectator hurls a boot on the stage, and the actor starts to retreat behind the scenes.

"Keep on playing!" cries the manager in the wings. "Keep on playing till we get the second boot!"

A Wise Provision.

My old friend Hiram was a pretty wise farmer. One day I found him packing a trunk. He put in a nightgown. It wasn't a man's nightgown.

"Look here, Hiram," says I, "what's the idea of a woman's nightgown in your baggage?"

Hiram looked at me as if I ought to know better, and said: "I'm going to cross the ocean and I want to be ready if the boat sinks. Remember the motto: 'Women and children first.'"

Enough Said.

Two well-known Kansas men who may as well be known as Smith and Jones, look much alike and are frequently taken for each other. One day Smith was in a certain big hotel not a thousand miles from Kansas City, and went into the dining-room for dinner. A negro waiter busily brushed off the crumbs and said:

"Why, how is you, Mr. Jones, how is you? I'se glad to see you. I hasn't seen you since I waited on your table when you all used to have a little game upstairs."

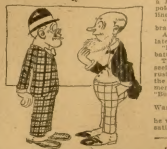
"I'm afraid you are mistaken," said Smith very quickly. "My name isn't Jones. You have the wrong man."

"Nuff said, nuff said," smiled the negro, with much bowing and scraping. "Ah knows all right when to keep mah mouf shet. Ah knows all right, Mr. Jones."

Wouldn't Flatter Her.

First Lady—"Strike me then—I defy yer—strike me!"

Second Lady—"Ugh! I wouldn't flatter yer by altering the shape of yer face."



"I suppose your son in college is working hard to get his sheepskin?"

"Not exactly. His most important work this spring is to qualify for a college sweater."

A Narrow Escape.

On market day in a small town Farmer Jones disposed of part of his livestock and went with the purchaser to the hotel to settle up. The purchaser made out a check, and said: "Now, I'll just cross it and it's done."

Old Jones' knowledge of checks was limited, and he inquired what that meant.

"Well, I just draw two lines and write 'and Co.' between," replied the butcher.

"No yer don't," shouted the farmer, to the amusement of the bystanders, "you're only getting the pigs for this. If you want the coo, it'll be ten pund more."

And old Jones is still telling his friends how he escaped being cheated.

The Difference Between Them.

"No, sir. Not a penny!" was the reply of young Ardup's opulent but immovable relative. "I've lent you more money already than you will ever pay back. You can shift for yourself henceforth. The difference between us is that I am provident and you are improvident."

"The difference between us," vengefully retorted young Ardup, with his hand on the doorknob, "is that I'm a man of moderate means and you're a man of immoderate meanness!"

Then he fled.

Making Room.

"Spring is about due."

"What's the harbinger?"

"I see the style notes and beauty hints have had to get off the baseball page."

A Roundabout Method.

Green had been in new lodgings just one week and had arrived at the conclusion that his tenancy would not be of long duration unless there was a material difference in the quality of the breakfast egg. He did not like to tell the landlady pointblank, so he adopted a roundabout method of communicating his opinion on the subject.

"Didn't you tell me you were fond of reading Macaulay, Mrs. Bluff?" he asked her, as he broke the shell of the egg.

"It was my lamented's favorite reading, Mr. Green," returned the widowed lady.

"Ah! Now I understand why you have your eggs from Italy."

"Whatever makes you think that, sir? They come from a farm near here."

"Really!" exclaimed Green, with a very pronounced sniff. "These eggs remind me forcibly of 'The Lays of Ancient Rome.'"

The American's Addition.

Once upon a time, so the story goes, a Frenchman visiting the tomb of Napoleon wrote on a convenient wall the lines:

"'Bony' was a great man, a soldier brave and true."

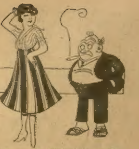
An Englishman coming along a little later read this and added:

"But Wellington did beat him at the battle of Waterloo."

The next visitor was an American, who, seeing the foregoing contributions, rushed into the competition with all of the restraint that characterizes the members of our great nation:

"But braver still, and truer far, and
tougher than shoe leather
Was Washington, the man who could
have licked them both together,"

he wrote, and doubtless went away quite satisfied with his climax.



"I hear [illegible]'s husband is a nut."

"He is, but he's a doughnut."

"A doughnut?"

"Yes—he has money."

The New Asylum.

A few months ago, at a council meeting in a certain small town, a well-known alderman astonished the members by saying:

"Gentlemen, we have been sending our lunatics to —— asylum for a long time now, and it has cost us a great deal of money; but I am glad to be able to tell you that we have now built an asylum for ourselves."

Took Him Up.

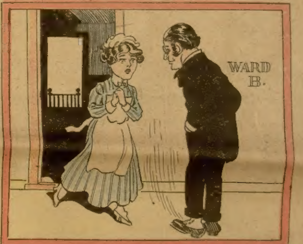
Clancy was chuckling.

"What's the joke?" asked Mooney.

"Why, Casey bet me $10 he could shoot a peanut off me head with a shotgun."

"What's funny about that?"

"I took him up because I know he'll miss it."—Judge.



Nurse—"Oh, doctor, Mr. von Spuds, while delirious swallowed his mouth thermometer!"

Doctor—"Good! Very good! I feared he would get away without an operation!"

A Somber Reflection.

"Biggins insists on being the life of the party."

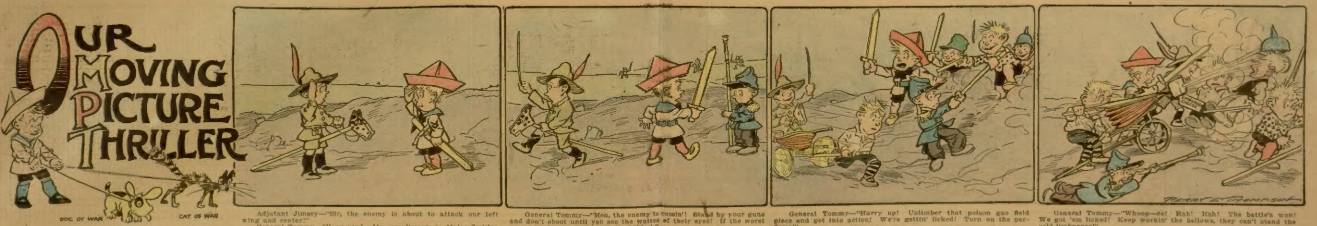
"Yes," commented Miss Cayenne; "and life is sometimes such a sad thing."

Nothing Deep-Seated.

Customer—"Confound you! You've cut my ear."

Barber—"Don't worry. It won't affect your hearing."

THE HORRORS OF WAR



Adjutant Jimsey—"Sir, the enemy is about to attack our left wing and center!"

General Tommy—"Very good. My compliments to Major Smithy, and tell him to rush the poison gas machine to the front."

General Tommy—"Men, the enemy is comin'! Stand by your guns and don't shoot until yeh see the waites of their eyes! If the worst comes to the worst we will die fightin'!"

General Tommy—"Hurry up! Unlimber that poison gas field piece and get into action! We're gettin' licked! Turn on the perfume!"

General Tommy—"Whoop—ee! Rah! Rah! The battle's won! We got 'em licked! Keep workin' the bellows, they can't stand the cold limburger!"

The Michaux Z-Ray.

([illegible])

two plain-[illegible] McCracken [illegible]

Here [illegible] Mr. Jarrick, [illegible] the Brownsville bank robbery and this murder in McClintock's hall bedroom were one big case al[illegible] and not two separate [illegible] admit that if th[illegible] the Mrs. Hunter case to c[illegible] with the town of Brownsville you [illegible] have jumped [illegible] that the black leather satchel [illegible] bearded man was toting around was no other than the satchel that was swiped a year ago at Brownsville, Missouri.'

"Yes. Go on."

"And if you had jumped to such a conclusion, you'd have done [illegible] what you did. I take it you [illegible] that this brown-bearded fellow was either Luke McCracken himself—or else the cashier of the bank. But it wasn't likely to be Luke McCracken, because if Luke had such a thing he wouldn't be traipsing around in Chi where he was in constant danger of being picked up as Scar-chin Luke. On the other hand, if it was the cashier of the Brownsville bank it would be easy enough to corroborate it by having the chief compare the dead body of Victor Michaux [illegible] photographs of all the bank cashiers in the United States—if not Missouri alone as kept in our Classification No. 6 book according to the new procedure of the American Bankers' Protective Association." He paused. "Am I making this question of mine clear, Mr. Jarrick?"

"Yes. Go on, Foley."

"Well, if you doped it out that this fellow was the cashier, then it was a cinch that Luke McCracken [illegible] got what he was reputed to have got in the Brownsville bank robbery. But a crook like him, if he was double-crossed, would stick on the trail of the man who crossed him—to the very end of the finish. [illegible] that McCracken must surely be in [illegible] some place, if he hadn't yet pulled out. And McGinnis and me got Luke as he was stepping into the Canal street depot. But"—and here Foley raised a hand—"how did you connect up Mrs. Hunter's death with the town of Brownsville, thus proving that they were one big case? There's the point."

"The absolutely vital point," echoed Callahan, bringing his fist down with a thump on his desk.

"You've propounded the question of them all, Foley," said Jarrick, smiling. "You've struck the hinge [illegible] were, of [illegible] double case. In [illegible] case is [illegible] that pair of handcuffs [illegible] there on the chief's desk. The left cuff represents Mrs. Hunter's death." Jarrick stepped forward a few feet and picked them up. "And the right cuff here"—he touched it—"represents the Brownsville bank robbery. But this little steel link that joins the right to the left is the part that has been held back in my deductions, if I read your question correctly."

Foley nodded, leaning forward [illegible]

"So I'll explain," Jarrick went on. "When we [illegible] X we [illegible] him peering thru the letter slot of McClintock's door. But whatever he did after that, whatever procedure he adopted, certainly left a small circle of white [illegible] imprinted on the rear of the velvet backing of the [illegible]. Now, that circle must have been lime, for the only white powder in the vicinity of the Devonshire is scattered about on the [illegible] around the mortar [illegible] ing across the [illegible] [illegible] tion the [illegible] from the slot to the chair, [illegible] inserted a cane thru the [illegible] pressed the tip squarely [illegible] spine. There we ha[illegible] did it.

"Now, if you had ever [illegible] little volume by [illegible] Marelli [illegible]led, 'Poiso[illegible] Relics of the P[illegible] have seen just [illegible] mentioned as bei[illegible] owned by ol[illegible] eccentric [illegible]

[illegible] Jarrick's [illegible] [illegible]pted by [illegible] of Al[illegible]

[illegible] where he was without [illegible] who killed Mrs. Hunter [illegible] curios of his [illegible] lies on the floor [illegible]

[illegible] out [illegible] Foley, McGinnis [illegible] stock-still [illegible] face [illegible] intense [illegible] dripping of [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] the floor and [illegible] Stillwell's or[illegible] on the back of [illegible]. Holding it straight up in the [illegible] ferrule pointing to the ceiling, he fumbled clumsily along its gold head. And his finger must have touched a concealed spring, for with a loud "whang," a [illegible] shining needle shot forth from the end of the cane. Only the barest fraction of a second later, a fine hairlike stream of yellow liquid rose from the tip of the needle, breaking into a spray of the same color. Instantly Jarrick struck a match and passed the flame thru the yellow cloud. A loud "pop" followed—a blaze of greenish light—and the vapor was gone.

"Ah!" he said reflectively. "Volatile, inflammable, and turns yellow on exposure to air. So it was Conin after all." He looked curiously down at Stillwell. "Might I ask, Stillwell, if it was in the cane all the time? Or did you distill it yourself from the leaves of the spotted hemlock?"

But the only answer from the man on the floor was a convulsive catching of the breath that sounded strangely like a sob.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THAT night Billy McClintock made a visit to Carolle Harbison. On the way over, he wondered what she would say when he should tell her that the man whom she had loved was dead. And he wondered, too, if she had met Vandersloan only under the name he had assumed in Chicago—Victor Michaux. Or had the latter confided to her that his name was really Charles Vandersloan? At times Billy felt that out of consideration to her feelings he should inform her of Vandersloan's death only and say nothing that might let her suspect that he was a thief with the property of the Brownsville bank in his possession, instead of the inventor of an all-[illegible]. Would she feel the loss [illegible] he wondered? And could he, now that the brown-bearded man was

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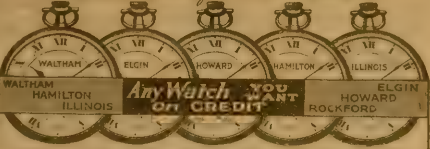

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gone, win back her affection—and hold it?

But he was too much like the rest of his sex, he knew well. He had loved her deeply. The dull pain in his heart made him doubt very much his ability ever to find another girl that he could care for as much as he had Carolle Harbison. Yet he knew full well that if she had turned from him on account of her infatuation for this Michaux, he could never again trust her as he had before. In fact, he realized that if he were to constitute her second choice he could not bring himself to the point where he wanted her for his wife.

His whole walk from the Devonshire to 1350 North LaSalle avenue was a restless casting about thru the whole maze of problems. But when he reached her gate he had come to no conclusion as to exactly how much he should tell her; how much he should withhold. On account of his own feelings in the matter, he almost hoped that he would not find her in. In that case he could leave the information in a short written note—and never see her again.

But Carolle was home. Sitting in the window of the darkened parlor, she must have heard the clang of the gate, for the hall door swung silently open before he had time even to press the electric button. And Carolle herself, clad in a pale, cream-colored gown that seemed to harmonize to the utmost degree with her yellow-gold hair, stood in the doorway looking out at him. Neither spoke for a second. Then Billy broke the silence

"Carolle," he said, with a little choking sensation in his throat, "I've come to tell you some important news—something that will surprise you exceedingly—and something that will make you feel pretty bad."

"I'm so glad you came, Billy," she breathed. "I—I was lonesome for a sight of you. I——"

What strange things women were, he ruminated. Last night she had practically sent him away from her. And here she stood, confessing that she had been lonely for a sight of him.

She led the way into the parlor, snapped on the shaded lamp, and dropped into a big leather armchair. And as Billy drew up another he noticed for the first time the unnatural paleness of her face, and the dark lines under her eyes which showed that her sleep had been scant the preceding night.

In a low voice he first asked:

"Where's your Uncle Peter?"

"He went to a lodge meeting, Billy." She paused. "Why did you ask? And what is your news?"

"I asked because I didn't wish my information to reach any one's ears but your own."

"Billy," she returned with a sigh, "you puzzle me so much. I can't fathom your words I——"

"Well, then," he remarked grimly, "I've come to tell you something about a man whom you know—a Mr. Victor Michaux."

Her face, however, remained absolutely blank. "Victor Michaux?" she repeated wonderingly. "Why, Billy, I don't know such a person; I've never even heard the name."

This was a puzzler. Possibly Vandersloan had made love to her under some other name, or else had taken a long chance and used his true one.

"Then," he asked slowly, "have you ever heard the name of—of Charles Vandersloan, a——"

In an ecstasy of terror, she pressed her hands together and her face became full of fright.

"Charles—Vandersloan," she repeated pitifully. "Then—then you know!"

"I'm not exactly sure what I know," he replied, with a short laugh. "I do know that a Charles Vandersloan was killed this morning by an accidental contact with a live wire." He stopped, not knowing what else to say.

But at his last words she seemed to relax in her chair. And she seemed to be unable even yet to comprehend the full import of his words.

"Oh!" she broke out finally. "Are you sure? Oh, it can't be possible. I——" She seemed helpless. Then she added a cryptic sentence: "Chance, it seems, has solved my problem for me. But, Billy, how do you know all this? I can't understand. It's all too bewildering."

He was quite puzzled by her reference to Chance and its solution of her problem. But, since she was a woman and no longer a child, he determined then and there to proceed and tell her the whole story.

So he began as he had the evening before—with his aunt's visit to the Devonshire. But this time he added the story of her strange roomer. He described her death, his shadowing of Victor Michaux from Carolle's home to the North Clark street rooming-house, the destruction of the rooming-house by [illegible] the death of the lone lodger next morning while probing around in the ruins, and his own visit to Chief Callahan's office. In turn he recounted his introduction to the eccentric-looking Copelin Jarrick and the latter's peculiar moves and deductions, which led up to the capture of Luke McCracken at the depot.

And all the time he talked Carolle sat rigid and wide-eyed in her chair, seeming scarcely to breathe, drinking in every word of his narrative.

He quickly sketched over President Allen Stillwell's story, and followed that by McCracken's account. Then, as briefly as possible, he told the girl of Jarrick's peculiar ratiocinative reconstruction of the crime, and his explanation of the dog's death and Victor Michaux's death. This done, he described Jarrick's sudden and adroit fastening of the crime on the shoulders of no less a person than Allen Stillwell himself. After a short pause he recounted Stillwell's short confession that he had killed Mrs. Hunter in exactly the manner outlined by Jarrick; that he had perpetrated the deed in the attempt to secure for himself the gold ingot which, if recovered by law, would have had to go back to the directors who made good the original loss; that the whole thing had come about from his too intimate knowledge of his father's collection of curios.

After he finished Billy McClintock rose stiffly and asked for his hat. But Carolle, fathoming his intentions, also rose quickly and placed her hands on his shoulders.

"But Billy," she said, "are you going to leave me before you learn the reason for what I said last night?"

He lost no time in dropping into his chair again. "I'd certainly like to know. It's been an unhappy twenty-four hours for me."

"And for me, too," she admitted. "But the explanation—well, I think it's due you. And I want to tell you now—and tell you all." She looked down at the floor for a long while. "This—this man Vandersloan came here Sunday night in a terribly nervous condition to see Uncle Peter. He told him a story similar to the one that he told your aunt, Mrs. Hunter; namely, that he had been working for several years in the West on an invention to propel a dangerous ray thru space for military operations. And he asked permission to lock it in uncle's safe, since he had reason to believe that he was being followed by secret agents. But Uncle Peter, you see, knew him from the time they were boys together; and he knew that Charles Vandersloan had been acting as cashier in a number of small banks between the Pacific coast and the Mississippi River. So he suspected that that black satchel in Vandersloan's hand contained something it shouldn't contain—perhaps stolen bonds or bills, or counterfeit money.

"He refused Vandersloan permission," Carolle went on, "to remain in the house or to leave anything in the safe. So Vandersloan left, declaring that if anything should go wrong with his plans he would drag both Uncle Peter and me into the newspapers. And when you asked me so suddenly who he was, I happened to remember an old servant girl we once had, Lena Ostergaard. So I hurriedly invented the name of Doctor Ostergaard, so that you might not suspect anything out of the way. And I——"

"But, dear girl," interrupted Billy, the light not yet dawning on him, "why should he have come to this house to ask such a favor? And how could he drag your name and your uncle's into disgrace?"

"Because," she replied simply, "I am not an orphan. Charles—Charles Vandersloan was my father. Now do you see, Billy?"

And, almost like the impact of a thousand stars on his cranium, Billy saw. He saw the explanation of all her peculiar actions of the night before. He saw the reason why she had sent him away. But before he had [illegible] time to tell her that he understood, she went on, a tremor showing plainly in her voice this time.

"Yes, Billy. He left my mother shortly after I was born. And when she died Uncle Peter took me to live with him—but he told every one that I was an orphan. And his kindness to me in all those years was the reason why I acceded absolutely to him in his demands on the subject of our marriage. But when Uncle Peter told me last night that my father had shown up here; that he believed father was tangled up in something underhanded, and that the police would have him before many hours, I saw the disgrace that it would bring on me when it got into the papers. And I knew that you, too, would feel the disgrace, and that—that you wouldn't want to marry me after learning such a thing. So I——" She stopped.

"Foolish, foolish girl!" he said tenderly, patting her slim hand. "And you thought that all this could cause me to love you less? Do you remember what Puck said in 'Midsummer Night's Dream' about certain mortals?"

She nodded happily. "But you do care after all, Billy? And you'll forget about last night?"

"Care?" he repeated emphatically. "Well, you bet your life I care. Now, more than ever, I can hardly wait that long year out before I can whisk you off to a little flat of our own."

"But, dear boy," she cautioned, "we must wait. Uncle Peter is obdurate on the subject of your having at least $500 to start life on. Yes, we must wait. We really must."

"Oh, we must," he mimicked. "I'm not quite so sure of that." He stood up and fumbled in his pocket for a nickel. He found one, and added: "If you'll excuse me for a minute I'll just step in the hall and call up a certain party about a little matter."

He stepped from the parlor to the telephone and asked [illegible]. After an eternity of clicking and delay, a voice answered him from the other end of the wire.

"Is this Jarrick?" he asked. "This is McClintock talking. You'll remember that you were to let me know tonight how that little argument came out in the chief's office after I left."

"By all means," replied [illegible] in the receiver. "Well, [illegible] the whole thing out. Mc[illegible] and refused to divulge the [illegible] where he'd planted that gold ingot, un[illegible] a signed agreement from Callahan that he'd not be prosecuted for the B[illegible]ville case and that he'd be [illegible] to equal credit with any one else for its recovery. The chief got up on his ear and decided that, since he was head of the detective bureau, he was entitled to an equal credit with any man under him who recovered it. I'm quite sure that

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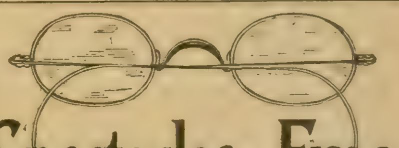

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no one doubts that it was poor old Jarrick who operated his thinking machine and helped along the process. And lastly, we're all agreed that if you hadn't brought the matter to Callahan's office as quickly as you did, McCracken would have skipped out of Chicago, and that would have been the end of the Brownsville gold brick. So the reward of three thousand that was put on the thing by the directors after they had to cough up a year ago, splits four ways—quadripartitely—in other words—$750 apiece. Does that answer your question? If you'll call round at Callahan's office tomorrow when the check gets there, we'll have a division of the—er—spoils."

Billy left the telephone and marched back into the parlor.

"Well, Carolle," he said, "if you'll get paper and pencil we might safely begin to figure out the furniture for that five-room flat of ours. For our problem, dear, just went up in a puff of smoke."

And he leaned over her and told her the good news

The End.

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Chicago Ledger

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Handsome is as handsome often doesn't.

There is nobody so easy for a woman to fool as herself.

Fully two-thirds of the talk people hand you is bunk.

A dark secret—the correct age of an old colored person.

The wise small boy laughs best when the teacher laughs.

Samson went at a rapid pace after he got that gate on him.

A man's credit is above par when he wants to borrow trouble.

A man seldom speaks lightly if he stops to weigh his words.

Things you can't understand are generally none of your business.

There is nothing quite so monotonous as the smile that won't come off.

It is easier for a woman to say that she is young than it is to look it.

[illegible] mony is one reason why [illegible] shy about marrying.

You can please the other fellow best by lending a hand instead of giving advice.

If people were as wise as they think they are the unexpected would seldom [illegible]

One way to earn a living is by honest labor, but some men never think of trying it.

And some men are even conceited enough to think that they understand a woman.

Don't get too self-important: the world will go on just the same after you get out.

Our idea of true faith is that of a man who advertises for the return of a lost umbrella.

There is nothing more idiotic than the smile of a pretty girl directed at some other fellow.

Some people never have a chance because they are unable to recognize one when they see it.

YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE MONEY.

Few people realize how rapidly values increase in the Pittsburgh District. The chances to make money in Real Estate are now greater than ever before. Pittsburgh leads the world as a manufacturing center; over a million dollars in wages distributed every working day. With the rapid increase of population, comes a large demand for homes. Located between the immense mills of the United States Steel and Westinghouse Companies, is Arlington Park, the only available vacant land for home-building. A limited number of building lots are now offered to the public for the first time. The owners are building on every fourth lot, selling the intervening lots at very reasonable prices. Write The Arlington Land Co., 712 Union Bank Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa., for information how $5 a month will secure you property that will quickly double and triple itself. You will be wise to write at once, as such a safe and profitable real estate investment is seldom offered.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

One's frock may be ruffles from girdle to foot.

We shall be wearing silks of all kinds all the year thru.

New silks are in large and striking checks and daring stripes.

Embroidered net, white and blue, makes a delightful lingerie dress.

The sleeveless nightgown is a new idea which is meeting with success.

The new collars are designed in such variety, one may wear the most conservative neckwear or flaring extremes, and in either case be in step with the march of the mode.

Ribbon trimming is much in evidence. Ribbon of faille, velvet or satin, in all widths, encircles bodices and skirts, or forms suspenders, old-fashioned loops with floating ends, or whole blouses and dresses combined with tulle, lace and chiffon.

Shops are showing many novelties in bathing suits these days. Particularly noticeable is the bloomer arrangement this year. Instead of the woven tights or the full-pleated or gathered bloomers worn hitherto, the new suits show bloomers of the material fitted closely just below the knee exactly like a woman's riding breeches. One suit has bloomers which tie at the knee in handkerchief knots lined with a contrasting color. The long-sleeved, high-necked bathing suit is shown in one instance. Tussore and pongee have entered the bathing suit material list. Colors are somber, but accessories and trimmings add a bright note. One particularly good-looking suit is of natural tussore lined at the handkerchief points of the skirt with mahogany silk with trimmings of the same.

⁂

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

Cold beefsteak makes a good hash on toast.

To remove paint from glass rub with hot vinegar.

When a metal teapot is not in use put a lump of sugar into the pot and this will prevent its becoming musty.

To make house ferns grow rapidly place four or five pieces of charcoal on top of soil; keep flower pot in jardiniere filled with water.

To renovate a shabby serge skirt sponge it over with hot vinegar until all the stains and grease marks disappear. Then thoroly press on the wrong side with a fairly hot iron.

When putting away woolen clothes it is a good idea to pin each suit or dress carefully in a separate newspaper. If moths should get into the closet or trunk where the clothes are put away the papers will protect the garments from being eaten.

⁂

HEALTH NOTES.

A convenience for a sick person is a good-sized shoe bag with ample pockets fastened with safety pins to the mattress at the side of the bed. In the pockets may be stored books, papers, fancy work, handkerchiefs and various articles that are needed.

Often in the sickroom it is necessary to have some device for keeping foods cold. For this purpose a homemade refrigerator can readily be constructed. A wooden box, sawdust and pails of two different sizes are needed. Insert one pail in the other; pack the ice around the smaller pail. Place pails in box, pack sawdust around pail. The food may be kept in the smaller pail.

To cultivate good health should be the object of every woman who cares about her appearance. There are four rules which govern good health—fresh air, plenty of sleep, simple foods and daily bathing. The last is by no means the least. The daily bath has as much to do with preserving one's health, and incidentally one's beauty, as any of the other three rules. Whether this bath shall be a cold or a warm one must be for the individual to decide, but the body should be washed all over once every day.

⁂

RECIPES.

CHOCOLATE CAKES—Egg whites, two; powdered sugar, one cup; cinnamon, one tablespoon; grated chocolate, two ounces; stale breadcrumbs, one cup, vanilla, one teaspoon. Beat whites to a stiff broth. Add sugar gradually, and continue beating. Mix grated chocolate, cinnamon and bread together. Add vanilla and beat thoroly. Drop with a teaspoon on buttered paper, putting them two or three inches apart. Bake in moderate oven twenty minutes.

ARIZONA NUT BREAD—Half a pint of peas, two cups of breadcrumbs, one teaspoonful of salt, one cup of milk, one saltspoonful of pepper, one heaping tablespoonful of butter, half a teaspoonful of kitchen bouquet, one egg and a half a pint of shelled roasted peanuts. You must previously soak the dried peas in water over night, drain, cover with water and boil until tender, throw away the water, drain again, then pass them thru a sieve. Add the chopped peanuts, bread crumbs, pepper, butter, salt, milk, kitchen bouquet and the thoroly beaten egg. Pour into a buttered baking dish and bake for at least an hour. This is concentrated nourishment.

BAKEN INDIAN TAPIOCA PUDDING—Three tablespoons tapioca (soak overnight), three tablespoons Indian meal, one quart milk, one egg, one tablespoon butter, one-half teaspoon salt, one-half cup sugar, one-half cup molasses. Scald milk and stir it into the cornmeal wet with cold water to make a paste and cook five minutes, then take from fire and add butter and tapioca. Beat egg, add sugar, salt and molasses to egg and beat, then mix all together and bake in buttered pan two hours in slow oven.

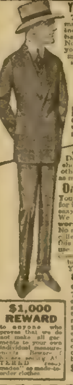
OATMEAL SOUP—Cooked mush, one cup; butter, two teaspoons; chopped onion, two teaspoons; bayleaf, one; yolk of egg, one; milk, one quart; salt, one-half teaspoon, pepper, one-half saltspoon. Soup-kettle, spoons, measuring cup. Put butter and onion in a soup kettle. Cook onion without browning until tender. Then add the oatmeal, milk, bayleaf, salt and pepper, stirring carefully, keeping temperature below boiling point. Strain thru a fine sieve, reheat and pour while hot over the beaten yolk of egg.

⁂

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

Baby's bonnet and cape strings get soiled very quickly, and a lot of time and annoyance may be saved by sewing small hooks on the end of all the strings and making cotton loops on the bonnets and cape.

First cousins to the old-fashioned pincushion dolls are the [illegible] door stops. Their black satin barrel shaped skirts are filled with sand, which makes them heavy enough to hold a door securely. The maids are correctly dressed to the daintiest detail, and when well made will stand a great deal of hard wear. They have attached to the back of their belts, under the fluffy apron sash, two narrow black satin ribbon strings. These loop over the doorknob, so that one can change the position of the door by pulling the little portress to a new place.



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Mrs. FRANCIS HOFF, Beaver Dam, writes: "I am 10 pounds less and cannot praise your treatment enough. It has done me lots of good in health and appearance."

Mrs. W. M. HANLEY, Chicago, writes: "I have lost 60 pounds. I shall always remember you as the best friend for fat women."

Mr. WILLIAM MENZEL, Minnesota, writes: "I have lost 119 pounds. I sleep good and have lots of strength and vigor. My health is good."

Mrs. M. A. LINK, Preston, writes: "Have lost 35 or more pounds. My kidneys seem to be much better, as I do not bloat nearly so bad."

Mrs. WM. H. MART, Cleveland, Ohio, writes: "You talk about a happy woman, that is what I am. I was so full of rheumatism I could hardly walk a step. I could not sleep nights. I can thank your treatment for my good health. I weighed 360 pounds. I now weigh 300 and am still losing."

Mrs. GEORGE KYLE, Junction City, writes: "I have reduced 30 pounds. I can go upstairs much easier than I could before. I will gladly recommend your treatment."

Mrs. E. M. MORGAN, Massachusetts, writes: "I have lost 60 to 65 pounds. My waist was 38 inches, abdomen was 45 inches, bust measure was 46 inches. Now my bust measure is 34 inches, waist measure 26 inches, and abdomen measure is 32 inches. No wrinkles, no biliousness or stomach trouble whatever."

SUMMER IS BEST SEASON FOR FAT REDUCTION

Heat Prostration, Sunstroke or Apoplexy, causing quick **Death,** or **followed** by **Softening of the** Brain, Heart Disease, Stomach Cramps, Food Poisoning, Septic Bowel Disorders, General **Debility** and Complete **Lacking of Vital Energy** are a few of the serious troubles which are most liable to come upon the fat man or woman during warm, humid weather. Apart from these **dangerous disorders,** there are numerous lesser yet distressing ailments such as skin rash, chafing, offensive perspiration, nervousness, headache, flatulency, etc. **Hot weather is very weakening and depressing for fat people;** it is seldom possible to be really contented. It is difficult to work, think, or enjoy one's self. The body becomes even larger, the **fat is packed in** more tightly than ever around the vital organs and dangerous trouble is thereby stored up for the future. **Fat people usually die 10 to 40 years too soon.** Reliable statistics of medical authorities and of leading insurance companies prove that over-stout people die much earlier than those who are thin or of normal weight. **Obesity** (corpulency) is an acknowledged **disease. It ruins health, figure, complexion, temper** and peace of mind. It **never cures itself** but becomes worse as the person grows older. **I know** the merits of my method so well that I will send a proof treatment free.

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On the Big Drive

Or, Glen Dayton's Fortune

By Milford Merrill

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CHAPTER VI.

"IT SEEMS to be you, Jack, sure enough," went on the log-driver. "And all the time I thought you were over the sea breaking up the black soil of Illinois. Got tired of farming already, eh?

"Well, I guess not. I'm back in Michigan after a yoke of steers. Gran'ther must have em, you know. As for me, I prefer animals without horns, but he came from the rock-bound shores of New England, and insists that steers are the cutest things for sod-busting, and so I am here to look for a pair he saw a year ago when we were in the pine woods before. I think old Sam Chiltern owned 'em. Can you locate the old fellow for me, Glen?"

"No," answered the other, "neither do I wish to. You'll not go back to dig in Illinois soil this spring."

"Sho, Glen, what'll gran'ther say? I've got to go back."

"Not on your life. I have shouldered the biggest deal of my life, Jack, and I have missed you. I can't make the riffle without you to help me. I know you won't go back on a friend."

Thereupon the Oxbow youth gave his friend a brief statement of the situation, winding up with the burning of the cottage and the disappearance of his Aunt Eunice.

The two boys walked down the street in company. Adams was deeply interested in the story his friend told, and assured him that he would stay by him till some of the tangles were straightened out.

"We'll put up at the hotel for the present," said Glen, "and I'll stand all the expense. I can't rest till I find Aunt Eunice; after that we will talk about the Big Drive."

Leaving Jack in their room at the hotel, Glen went upon the street. He felt very much relieved at meeting his stalwart Waukegan friend once again. It seemed as tho he were fighting a hardly contested battle, and that reinforcements had arrived just in the nick of time.

Glen wished to see the ashes of his home once more, so he hurried down to the spot, and was about to explore the vicinity, when from the semi-ruins of the little stable there appeared a gray-bearded man, who strode silently toward him, shaking his head, mumbling unintelligible words.

The man coming from the ruined stable was instantly recognized by Glen as Simon Hethridge, the strange hermit of Yellow Swamp. The old man lifted his gaze to the approaching youth, ceased his mumbling, and advanced with outstretched hand, apparently pleased to meet the boy woodsman once more.

"How are you, Glen? I am mighty glad to see you."

There was no indication of insanity in voice and mien, of the queer old hermit.

"The same here, Mr. Hethridge," greeted our boy hero.

Both turned to gaze at the ruins of the once beautiful cottage home. Then the hermit looked toward his young companion.

"When?" he asked.

"A week ago," answered the boy.

"Were you at home?"

"No."

"Too bad. Where is the lady—Mrs. Trescott?"

"That is what I should like to know," responded Glen. "I haven't been able to locate my aunt. She left the shelter of the Simonds home some time during the night of the fire, and has not been seen by any of her friends since. I very much fear something may have befallen her. Plainly speaking, I am very greatly worried on her account."

The old hermit's face grew worried as well. He seemed deeply moved.

"Heaven grant no ill has come to Eunice!" he breathed in a low undertone.

"I thought perhaps you might know something of her whereabouts, sir?"

"I know? How should I, Glen?"

"You were seen hanging around the cottage on the very night of the fire," sternly uttered the boy, trying to penetrate the innermost thoughts of the old man with his gaze.

"Who says that?" with a low drawl.

"The neighbors all about here."

"Don't you believe them, young man."

"Isn't it true that you were here that night a week ago?"

"I was not far away," and a guttural laugh fell from the man's lips. "But I had nothing to do with burning your home. Why should I? Aren't we the very best of friends, Mr. Dayton?"

"I supposed so up to now," granted the anxious boy.

"And we shall be right along hereafter. I understand that you are to manage the Big Drive this summer?"

"Yes; but I am wholly concerned about my aunt just now," rebuked the boy. "If you can't tell me anything I shall not tarry to exchange nothings with you."

"Stay, rash boy," commanded Hethridge, as Glen would have hastened from the spot. "Let not your anger get the better of your judgment. I am interested in your aunt as well as are you. I like her because of the care she has taken of the boy left to her charge by a [illegible] sister. She has kept that faith [illegible] acceptable manner, I take it."

"Mrs. Trescott has been a mother to me [illegible] what you mean, sir," cried Glen. "I [illegible]n't ask any better. [illegible] has been too good to a fellow [illegible] who has often tried her [illegible] the breaking point."

"As for that, I imagine you have been a fairly good boy, Glen Dayton," smilingly returned the hermit.

"Not half good enough to Aunt Eunice. Where were you when the cottage burned, Mr. Hethridge?"

"I was out of the city."

"Then it is not true what they tell me?"

"What do they tell you, lad?"

"That you were seen hanging about this vicinity on the night of the burning of the cottage."

"Some truth in it, I agree," assented the graybeard. "I had been looking around seeking a location for building a house. I have got tired of wandering, Glen Dayton, and am thinking of setting down for the remainder of my life. This neighborhood, I thought, might afford a site, but I am now decidedly against it."

"Go on, sir," urged the boy growing impatient.

"Not much to go on about, lad. I looked in upon your aunt, and I thought she seemed uncommonly desolate. My heart was touched——"

"Never mind that foolish sentiment," broke in the boy, impatiently. "I want to know what you were doing about here if you did not set fire to this cottage?"

His suspicions were bluntly put, and the hermit recoiled.

"After what has taken place between you and me, Glen Dayton, how can you be so cruel? Twice you saved my life. Think you I'd turn as a thief and a robber and rend you after that? It would be the height of scoundrelism. I am very deeply hurt because of your cruel accusations, dear lad," and the shaggy head fell into his palms, the whole slim frame being shaken as with sobs.

An old man in tears was enough to disconcert a saint. Glen was troubled.

"I did not mean to hurt your feelings," he said, "but I do want the truth."

"And do you think I would lie to you?" huskily asked the old man, lifting eyes that winked away briny tears to the face of his inquisitor.

"I'm afraid that is what you have been doing," avowed the boy, who had been strongly urged by Mr. Simonds to arrest the hermit, if he could lay hands on him, as guilty of the crime of arson. And yet Glen could in no wise understand the motive for such a crime. He had befriended the hermit, for which the old fellow had seemed grateful.

"I was here just before the fire, it seems," explained the old man in a stiffening tone. "I was anxious about—about—well about your Aunt Eunice. You see, I imagined she was left too much alone," and then the speaker broke short off, seemingly embarrassed at his own statements.

Glen was puzzled.

"What do you know about Mrs. Trescott, sir?" demanded the boy, turning sharply upon the shaking form of the old man. "I don't care to have every old tramp in the country hanging about my home while I am absent. What have you to say against my having you arrested for this destruction of property?"

"Nothing at all, lad. Go ahead if you like."

The speaker meekly crossed his hands, standing with bowed head before the boy log-driver. He seemed very much cast down, as tho the suspicions of his supposed friend hurt him deeply.

"I admit being here the evening you say the fire occurred, but as Heaven is my witness I did not set the fire; in fact, I knew nothing about it until today. I went from the city that very night. I have been in Chicago—came back only this morning. Finding the home of my friends in ashes was a great shock to me. You think perhaps I am lying to you now, lad, but it's Heaven's truth I am telling you."

The deep earnestness of the speaker, together with his dejected air, convinced our boy hero that the man was speaking the truth. He held out his hand saying:

"Forgive me, Mr. Hethridge; I believe you."

"Heaven bless you, my boy."

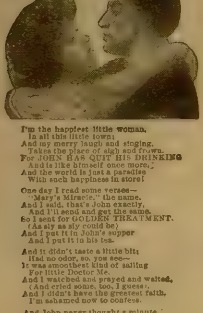
"One word more. Why have you taken such an interest in me—in Aunt Eunice. You have never spoken with her to my knowledge."

"No, I haven't, not in years, at any rate; but I am interested in you, lad. I like to see young folks climb, fight, overcome obstacles, and climb, climb on up the ladder till they reach the top. You are one of that sort, and I [illegible] because she is your aunt [illegible] ested in h[illegible] son. I [illegible] but I h[illegible] feel- [illegible]"

"I hardly think sh[illegible], sir," [illegible] spoke Glen. "Aunt Eunice is [illegible] most of the time nowadays, and I

Why John Quit Drinking

By John's Wife



I'm the happiest little woman,
In all this little town;
And my merry laugh and singing,
Takes the place of sigh and frown.
For JOHN HAS QUIT HIS DRINKING
And is like himself once more,
And the world is just a paradise
With such happiness in store!

One day I read some verses—
"Mary's Miracle," the name,
And I said, that's John exactly,
And I'll send and get the same.
So I sent for GOLDEN TREATMENT,
(As sly as sly could be)
And I put it in John's supper
And I put it in his tea.

And it didn't taste a little bit;
Had no odor, so, you see—
It was smoothest kind of sailing
For little Doctor Me.
And I watched and prayed and waited,
(And cried some, too, I guess),
And I didn't have the greatest faith,
I'm ashamed now to confess.

And John never thought a minute
He was being cured of drink,
And soon he's as well as any one,
It makes me cry to think!
Just makes me cry for gladness,
I'm so proud to be his wife—
Since he is cured of drinking,
And leads a nice, new life.

"Since John he quit a-drinking!"
I can't say it times enough!
And hates and loathes a liquor
As he would a poison stuff.
And when I say my prayers at night
As thankful as can be—
I pray for John the most of all—
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am sorry it is so. Sometimes she is very melancholy."

"Why is she thus?"

"She never talks at such times, sir."

"Is it anything you know about?"

"Nothing, sir."

The old hermit stood thoughtful for a moment, then caressed the shoulder of the boy, saying: "I will help you find your aunt if you wish it, Glen."

The boy did wish it, and the two went about the search in company.

Glen saw that the hermit was a man of deep feeling, and that he was of an intelligence far above the ordinary. What had come into his life to make of him an outcast from his fellows puzzled the boy not a little. He fully believed in his innocence of the burning of his aunt's cottage. There could be no possible motive for the crime, in any event.

It was not until the day was well advanced that a wide, short person leaped a fence and came scrambling into the street in front of Glen, who was now alone.

"I've found her!" cried Jack Adams.

"Found Aunt Eunice?" hailed Glen, grasping the panting youth by the arm.

"That's what I have," proclaimed Jack.

"Where is she?"

"Up at a house in Nigger Grove."

The speaker pointed over his shoulder. Back there on a rising plat of ground was the grove, a stretch of scrubby timber growing at the outskirts of Oxbow, and at least a mile from the burned cottage. The neighborhood had once been a refuge for some runaway slaves, since which time it had gone by the name of Nigger Grove. The neighborhood was not a savory one, and Glen was puzzled to understand why his aunt should have thought of seeking refuge there.

"You are joking, Jack," gasped Glen.

"Look a-here, pard, did I ever joke you on a serious subject?" demanded the indignant Jack Adams.

"No, but my aunt would never have gone for shelter into such a disreputable neighborhood."

"Wait till you learn more about it, Glen, old man," warned the Waukegan boy. "I've sailed the lakes, worked in the woods, driven skidding team, done chores, broke calves, milked cows, lived everywhere amongst men, and I tell you right now the folks in Nigger Grove ain't all bad. Your aunt is stopping with old Doc Meadows."

"What!" exclaimed the boy-driver. "Not old Jick Meadows, the half-breed medicine man?"

"The same, Glen. His squaw is as tender as a white angel, if she has a copper skin; and betwixt the two they're helping her right along."

"Helping Aunt Eunice?" uttered Glen, alarmedly. "What do you mean? Is my poor aunt ill?"

"Now, don't be scared to death, Glen," soothed broad Jack Adams. "Your aunt got an awful shock that night of the fire. She was all alone in the house and she had a narrow escape; in consequence she lost her wits. She's now jest a trifle batty; but Jick tells me she'll come around all right within a few days. He wants to see you right away."

Glen was deeply shocked at the words of his friend.

"I went to the Grove on purpose to see old Jick," said Jack, by way of explaining his presence at the half-breed's home, "and ran upon Mrs. Trescott. You see, I was owing the old fellow for a little service he did Gran'ther Adams last year. The old gentleman told me to be sure and hunt up Jick and pay him. Lucky, wasn't it? I hadn't the least expectation of finding your aunt there."

Glen was glad enough to find his more than mother, but saddened at the news of her being out of her mind. He blamed himself for this sad state of affairs, and was almost ready to sacrifice his prospects in order to be continually at his aunt's bedside.

"I certainly shan't leave Aunt Eunice while she is in the least out of her head," said he, as he walked into the Grove with Jack Adams.

CHAPTER VII.

THE home of the old Indian medicine man was a neat log building of four rooms. Nothing could be whiter than the floors, on each of which were braided rugs of Indian design. Mrs. Meadows, a half-blood like her husband, received Glen with unwonted, unexpected cordiality. She was a fat, rather good-looking woman of 50, with pleasing address and black eyes that beamed with kindliness. She assured the boy that his aunt was doing well, and would soon be herself again.

"Head hurt," said the woman. "Somehow in the fire, I s'pose."

"May I see her?"

"She sleeps now. Wait."

Glen waited with no little impatience, and a deep, ill-defined fear. What if his aunt should be permanently disabled, either in body or mind? The thought rasped on the sensitive soul of our young hero. All his planning for money had been with a view to making the life of his foster-mother more enjoyable. It was for her that he sought to mount to the highest pinnacle of a successful business career.

When, an hour later, Glen was ushered into the presence of his aunt, he found her sitting in a big bamboo chair, propped with pillows. Her face was very white, and the light in her eyes was distinctly that of one not quite herself.

"It is Glen," and she held out a thin white hand for her nephew's clasp.

"Are you feeling better, Aunt Eunice?" he asked.

"Yes, I think I am."

"I am so sorry——"

"Don't waste any tears over me, Glen," cried the thin lips quickly. "I am not worth it, dear boy. You would be better off without me. I have been a burden to you for many years. Why couldn't the timber have put me out of the world and done with it?"

"No, no, auntie, you mustn't talk like that!" Tears started to the eyes of the young log-driver, as he bent quickly over the fragile form in the big chair, kissing her fondly on either cheek. "I am going to provide you with a better home than the one that burned. Think nothing about the loss of the old house; it isn't worth a tear, dear Aunt Eunice. You are to get well and strong right away. Mrs. Meadows says you will, and she knows."

"Mrs Meadows has been very kind," murmured the injured woman. "I don't believe I shall ever be able to repay her for what she has done for me. I wanted to die when I realized that everything was lost in that awful fire. I have been too long a useless member of this world. You would get on much faster without a clog like me dragging you down, dear boy."

Her mind was steeped in deepest melancholy; Glen could see this, and he feared for her sanity. She had been hurt on the head, and the blow seemed to have injured her brain.

In vain did the boy try to reassure her that he loved to work for the woman who had been a mother to him for so many years; she seemed not to understand. Glen quitted the place after half an hour, noting that his aunt's mind had quieted down.

He saw and talked with Jick Meadows, who assured the boy that he was confident he could cure his aunt of her trouble within a few days. Glen was far from satisfied with this. The Indian doctor had been very successful in his practice, yet his methods were necessarily crude as compared with the methods of the white doctors, and he so expressed himself to the anxious boy.

"Me hab faith in my way, tho," finished the old half-breed. "No s'prised at white boy feel so bad. Me tell you, dere's de big white doctor, Rawlings. Get him; you b'lieve heem, eh?"

"Yes," said Glen, relieved. "I will call in Doctor Rawlings."

The boy made haste to join Jack Adams, and the two hurried back to the city. Doctor Rawlings was considered at this time the best physician and surgeon in that part of the State.

Glen accompanied the doctor back to the Meadows home. After a brief looking over of his patient, leaving instructions and medicine, Doctor Rawlings went aside with the anxious Glen.

"The old man has done well," began he. "I will leave instructions with him about the case, and you just hang around for a few days, after which your aunt will be able to go with you anywhere you like."

"Then you think she will wholly recover, sir?"

"Sure thing, my boy," and a smile touched the bearded lips of the great physician.

A great load was lifted from the heart of the boy log-driver. It would be so good to have his aunt back to sound health once more after her close call to death.

Jack Adams was equally delighted with the outlook.

"You will be able to go up on the job very soon, Glen, after all."

"I hope so," answered Glen, whose anxious countenance began to take on a more hopeful expression. "I shan't stir a step out of town, tho, till I am sure Aunt Eunice is going to get well."

"I don't blame you, Glen," expressed the other boy. "I never had a mother, and I know what it is to want for one. In your aunt you have a mother as good and kind as the real thing. Shall I go on up the river? I may not be able to do much, yet it will be a waste of time for me to stick around here, you know."

Glen thought of the lost drive contract, and said: "Wait till I see Mr. Weatherby."

"All right, it won't take you long to see him. He's at home, for I met his turnout with the old man on the seat with Miss Myra. Say, Glen, but that girl grows prettier every day she lives. She's a peach and no mistake."

"Never mind Myra," frowningly spoke Glen. "I'll go over immediately and speak with the lumber king. I will see you again at the hotel this evening."

Glen met Mr. Rexford and Myra coming down the front steps of the big

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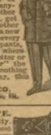

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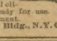

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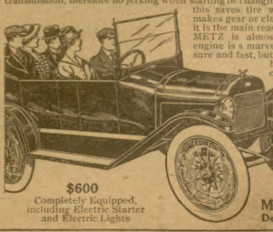

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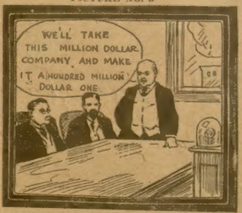
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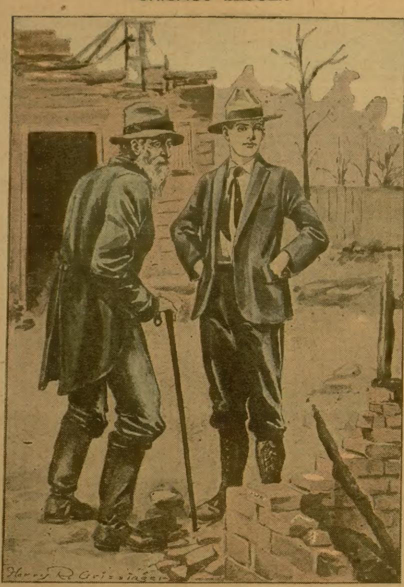

Both turned to gaze at the ruins.

mansion as he approached on his errand to see the boom manager and lumber king of Oxbow. The happy look on the face of the girl told of the enjoyment she had in the company of this rich Chicagoan. And just then, for one brief instant, a queer, indefinable pain shot to the heart of our boy hero.

He had not thought much about Myra Weatherby of late, and the troubles that had come to his aunt served to banish almost every other thought from his active brain. Now he paused just behind a big tree to watch the movements of the two.

Tall, slender, stately, with the bearing of one used to society, Rexford gave himself freely to discussing some pleasing subject with his pretty partner in their walk. And Myra—how tall, how very like a woman she seemed! And all the time Glen had thought of her only as a schoolgirl, scarcely out of short skirts.

They made a splendid-looking couple as they passed along, the girl vivacious and smiling, her companion grave, yet listening interestedly.

Glen bit his lip as they drew away down the street. He was conscious of a new feeling for the lumberman's daughter from that moment, a feeling that Myra Weatherby was no longer a child, but had with strange suddenness blossomed into a rare and beautiful womanhood. Others realized this fact, as for instance the accomplished gentleman who was with her at the present moment.

"I don't quite see what Myra finds in that man to care for his company," muttered the boy, as he walked thoughtfully up to the house.

"The boss is down to his mill office, I reckon," said the precocious lad who opened the door to Glen. "Anyhow, I saw him going that way ten minutes ago."

Glen lost no time in getting to the mill office, where he found the gentleman he sought in consultation with one of his underlings.

"Come in, Glen," called the great man, noticing the boy at the threshold. Glen obeyed, sitting down in the chair pointed out by Weatherby. After the departure of his caller, the lumber king turned to his boy visitor, a half-smile on his face. "How did you find things up around Howe Lake, Glen?"

"All right, sir."

"You are back seeking your crew and teams, I take it?"

"Yes, sir. I have had a little hard luck."

"Hard luck, eh? In what shape does it come, Glen?"

The big man lit a cigar and smoked leisurely.

Glen told of the burning of his aunt's home, and the loss of its contents, not forgetting to mention the log-driving contract.

"The contract burned in the house, you say?"

"It did, sir."

Glen flinched a little under the steady gaze of the big man. He could not help noticing the hard lines about the stern mouth, and it seemed an age before the lumberman got around to speak again. He removed his cigar and smiled.

"That's all right, boy," he said, his words spoiling the smile. "I have the original, so it won't matter very much, anyhow."

And yet there flashed over the face of the speaker a placid, self-satisfied expression that did not quite appeal to his visitor.

"It would be best for me to have a copy, Mr. Weatherby," suggested Glen.

"You had a copy, didn't you?"

The harshness of that voice chilled his listener.

"Yes, but it was burned——"

"Oh, yes, so you tell me, but——"

"And I came here to get another copy, Mr. Weatherby."

"Didn't I tell you it was all right?" grunted the lumberman. "Go on about your business, boy; the loss of the contract won't make a cent's difference with me. You know the substance of it; so do I. That is sufficient."

The big man rose to his feet, brushing off the ash from his cigar. Glen sprang up also. He stood twirling his hat, not quite satisfied.

"Then you won't make me a new contract, Mr. Weatherby?" he asked huskily.

"Certainly not," with a growl. "I haven't time to monkey with irresponsible parties. It's all right as I told you. Go ahead and do your work, and there'll be no trouble. I imagine you aren't afraid to trust Shedd Weatherby."

Glen might have reminded the haughty magnate that he had before now trusted him to his sorrow, but he refrained. Instead, he bade the lumberman good day and took his departure.

Weatherby stood watching the receding form of the boy from his window.

"Best news I've heard in a year," he chuckled. "Lost his contract, eh? Good enough. I am now in a position to make this young cur smart for some things he did to me a year ago, and I'll do it, too, as sure as my name is Shedd Weatherby."

CHAPTER VIII.

DOCTOR RAWLINGS' prediction with regard to the immediate betterment of Eunice Trescott proved true. Within three days Glen was satisfied with the improvement of his relative, and made ready to return to his work on the river. Adams had gone on ahead, agreeing to wait Glen's coming at Wenago.

While the boy log-driver was looking about for a place to leave his aunt, he received a letter from the up-river town that surprised and pleased him. It read:

"Dear Glen: I have heard of your misfortune, and write to tell you to fetch your aunt to us. My wife has long been anxious to know Mrs. Trescott, and now is the time for them to get acquainted. Our house is roomy and comfortable. Your aunt is welcome to stay with us as long as she likes. Be sure and bring her with you when you go up the river.

"Your friend,

"JOHN A. BEAVER."

"Just the thing!" exclaimed Glen, his eyes misty with gladness and gratitude.

The up-river millowner had often asked Glen to bring his aunt to them at Wenago, but somehow the time never seemed propitious; consequently the two women had never met. The boy had been to Beaver's house many times while rafting lumber for the chief business man of the village, and he and Mrs. Beaver had become fast friends.

Glen's aunt seemed slightly flustered when her nephew showed her the letter.

"I don't know that I care to associate with such high-up folks, Glen," said she, with one of her charming smiles.

The boy knew that Aunt Eunice was quite capable of making good in any society. He simply laughed at what she said, speaking quickly:

"Never mind the high-ups, Aunt Eunice. I'll risk you anywhere. Besides, Mrs. Beaver is one of the most unpretentious, motherly women on earth. You can't help but like her. I had thought of this very thing, but of course would not suggest it. Now that the chance is open you must improve it."

The aunt did not attempt to cross her nephew in this. She and he were the best of chums, and whatever seemed best to him she had no wish to gainsay. Thus it was that Mrs. Trescott became a member of the Beaver household at the brisk little lumbering town of Wenago.

Before going out of town, Glen called on Letty Walden, having a very nice visit with his old school chum, and promised her on his word of honor that she might look for him on the 10th of June to be at the commencement exercises of the Oxbow Academy.

"Myra will graduate at the same time," smilingly assured the brown little Miss Letty, "and I am sure you will wish to see her get off her piece from the public rostrum, even if you do not enjoy coming so far to watch poor little me make a fool of myself."

"No danger of that," said Glen, as he kissed Letty good-by.

"Be sure and tell Jared," called the natty miss, as Glen was walking away.

"That I will," he called back, as he went on his way.

Jared was Glen's cousin, about his own age, a very sensible, ambitious youth, who had often worked with Glen, yet more frequently preferred his own way, which cast his lot among strangers. At the present time Jared was somewhere in the North woods, working for a lumber firm. Our boy hero hoped to meet him and secure his services as clerk of the Big Drive.

That first night at Wenago, after seeing his aunt safely installed at the Beaver home, proved a most eventful time, one long to be remembered by the driver boss.

Mr. Beaver, it seemed, was absent on one of his woods logging jobs, a fact that Glen regretted when he learned the condition of affairs. Wenago boasted two hotels and six saloons, so that liquid refreshments were not hard to find. The village was a point where men going to and from the logging woods frequently assembled, and ofttimes there were high jinks carried on right under the nose of the authorities.

It was late afternoon when Glen left the Beaver home to go down onto the main street of the village and take stock in what was going on. He expected to meet here a lot of men whom he had engaged to go up the river and work on the drive.

Going down the long hill leading from the residence portion of the town, Glen ran upon Jack Adams, who seemed very much excited. His wide face was flushed, his wide-set blue eyes fairly snapping. His coat collar was awry, his hair bristling in scraggly wisps from under his hat.

"Good land, Glen, I'm thunderin' glad you've come!" exclaimed the stout Waukegan boy. "There's sheol to pay in town, and nobody seems to have authority to stop it."

"Is that so, Jack?"

"You bet it is, Glen."

"What is it all about? You look as

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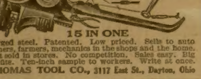

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LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.
Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Ruptured People—Get This On 60 Days Trial
You know you can't possibly tell anything about a truss or anything else for rupture merely by trying it on, for a truss or so called "appliance" may seem allright at first and afterward prove utterly worthless.
But here is something you can try sixty days—just as a test—without having to risk a single cent.

Away With Leg-Strap and Spring Trusses
So far as we know, our guaranteed rupture holder is the only thing of any kind for rupture that you can get on 60 days' trial—the only thing we know of good enough to stand such a long and thorough test. It's the famous Cluthe Automatic Massaging Truss—made on an absolutely new principle—has 18 patented features. Self-adjusting. Does away with the misery of wearing belts, leg-straps and springs. Guaranteed to hold at all times—including when you are working, taking a bath, etc. Has cured in case after case that seemed hopeless.
Write for Free Book of Advice—Cloth-bound, 104 pages. Explains the dangers of operation. Shows just what's wrong with elastic and spring trusses, and why drugstores should no more be allowed to fit trusses than to perform operations. Exposes the humbugs—shows how old-fashioned worthless trusses are sold under false and misleading names. Tells all about the care and attention we give you. Endorsements from over 5000 people, including physicians. Write to-day—find out how you can prove every word we say by making a 60 day test without risking a penny.
Box 25—Cluthe Co., 125 E. 23rd St., New York City

Painful Swollen Veins Quickly Relieved
Mrs. R. M. Remler, of Federal, Kansas, writes an interesting account of her success in reducing a severe case of enlarged veins that should be encouraging to others similarly afflicted. She suffered with badly swollen and inflamed veins (in fact, one had broken), for more than seven years before she became acquainted with Absorbine, Jr., and used it. Absorbine, Jr., was faithfully applied for several weeks and, to quote from her letter, "The large knots in the veins left, it was all nicely healed, and has not bothered me since."
Absorbine, Jr., is an antiseptic liniment—healing, cooling, and soothing. Safe and pleasant to use.
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EASY-TO-QUIT is a harmless, effective treatment for Cigarette, tobacco and snuff habits. Can be given without patient's knowledge in coffee, tea or other drink. Odorless, tasteless, purely vegetable. Send name and address for trial treatment in plain wrapper FREE! Treatment inexpensive. Send no money. Write NOW! THE ROGERS DRUG & CHEMICAL CO., 222 Lincoln Inn Court, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

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SEND ONLY 20 CENTS FOR $1.75 Packages Perfume of Roses for Sweethearts. Union Perf. Co., Dept. 26, Palatine, Ill.

CARDS Dice, Magic Goods, Novelties. Catalog Free. B. L. SMYTHE CO., NEWARK, MO.

tho you had had a scuffle with somebody, Jack. I hope you didn't get the worst of it."

"Well," growled the Waukegan boy, "It's this way. There's a lot of woodsmen tearing drunk at the Bowery Tavern. They're making Rome howl, and whoever gets in their way goes down. I got in the way, of course——"

"And they were too many for you, Jack," interjected Glen. "Too bad. I am sorry you mingled in the strife. I suppose, tho, your natural pugnacity wouldn't let you stay out where there's war going on."

"Just one thing only kept me from going in and thrashing half a dozen of the bullheads, Glen," snorted Jack.

"And that was?"

"A desire to serve you."

"To serve me?" cried the puzzled Glen.

"Sure thing. Ain't I your representative here till you come?"

"Why, yes, of course."

"Well, that's what I was trying my best to do. Some of 'em got mad and called me a liar. I knocked down the chap who said that. Afterward I was sorry I did it. The poor fellow says he's the best friend you have in the North woods, and that he meant no insult when he told me to go to the hot place."

"Who is he, Jack?"

"Name's Phil."

"What, not Phil Deckford, Jack?"

"Yes, that's his name. He's boiling drunk now, and——"

"Phil Deckford drinking—drunk!"

A shocked ring filled the voice of Glen Dayton, a saddened expression coming to his face. He had known Philip Deckford for less than a year, yet in that time he had learned to love the boy, who was somewhat younger than himself, the son of an itinerant Methodist preacher, who had run away from home to the lumber woods, and who had become rather wild. He was a smart boy, however, and Glen had taken up for him when he came near going to jail for some small sin he had committed when intoxicated.

The minister's son had promised Glen, with tears in his eyes, that he would never touch another drop of liquor as long as he lived. Not only this, but he solemnly agreed to return home and become a model member of society. He had a stepmother whom he couldn't abide, and this was his excuse for quitting home.

It had been several months since Deckford had bidden farewell to Glen and set out for his home in old Vermont. The boy log-driver had not seen him since, supposing him to be long since at home, pursuing an exemplary life. To learn that Phil was back in the lumber country, and drinking again, shocked our boy hero.

"The kid's got two beautiful black eyes," ventured Jack.

"Do you mean Phil?"

"Exactly."

"Why, I always thought his eyes were a delicate shade of blue——"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" volleyed Jack, pulling off his hat, scratching his head.

"Why this levity, Jack?"

"I blacked the kid's eyes, Glen," chuckled Jack Adams. "He's a peaked-looking baby, and I am sorry I hit him. He was too drunk to fight, anyhow. But of course I can't allow anybody to call me a liar and not give him a chug."

Glen accompanied his friend downtown.

Leaning against the side of the tavern entrance was a tall, slender boy, clad in very choice garments, much soiled just now from contact with the dirt of the street. Glen halted and regarded the young fellow with a sorrowful gaze. Despite his swollen features and blackened optics, our young hero recognized him as the Methodist preacher's son.

"Phil Deckford," cried Glen rebukingly, "what are you doing here? I thought you were at home in Vermont. You have not kept your promise to me."

"Oh, Glen, is it you?"

The speaker held out a shaking white hand.

"Aren't you ashamed——"

"Don't scold, Glen, old boy," broke in the other in thick-tongued protest. "I couldn't stand that woman's tongue, so I left again. I wanted to get as far away as possible. Dad stood up for her, and that was enough for me. I quit dead, yes I did. I heard you were hiring men to work on the drive. Is it so?"

"Yes, Phil, it is true, but you can't work for me."

"Why—why can't I, Glen?"

The speaker reeled about unsteadily, and seemed about to fall. Jack Adams stepped quickly forward and steadied the young fellow.

"I wouldn't a' hit you had I known you was Glen's friend," apologized the Waukegan boy.

"S'all right. Deserved it, no doubt," gurgled the inebriate.

"Jack," and Glen turned toward his companion, "suppose you take him somewhere away from here, and find a place for him to sleep off this booze?"

"I'll do it, pard."

Locking arms with the drunken youth, wide Jack Adams led him away. And then Glen entered the barroom, where a dozen men in varied states of intoxication vied with one another in making pandemonium reign again. Some of these men were of his own crew, hired for the purpose of going onto the drive.

The boy log-driver requested the barkeeper to sell them no more liquor. The proprietor rather resented Glen's interference. A few sharp words followed, after which rough hands were laid upon the youth, and he was rudely hustled toward the outer door.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

IS HE CRAZY?

The owner of a large plantation in Mississippi, where the fine figs grow, is giving away a few five-acre fruit tracts. The only condition is that figs be planted. The owner wants enough figs raised to supply a co-operative canning factory. You can secure five acres and an interest in the canning factory by writing the Eubank Farms Company, 986 Keystone, Pittsburgh, Pa. They will plant and care for your trees for $6 per month. Your profit should be $1,000 per year. Some think this man is crazy for giving away such valuable land, but there may be method in his madness.

* * *

A Pack of Cards.

A nobleman who kept a great number of servants reposed great confidence in one of them, which excited a jealousy in the others, who, in order to prejudice their master against him, accused him of being a notorious gamester.

Jack was called up and closely interrogated; but he denied the fact, at the same time declaring he never played a card in his life. To be more fully convinced, the gentleman ordered him to be searched, when, behold! a pack of cards was found in his pocket.

Highly incensed at Jack's want of veracity, the nobleman demanded, in a rage, how he dared to persist in an untruth.

"My lord," replied he, "I certainly do not know the meaning of a card. The package in my pocket is my almanac."

"Your almanac, indeed; then I desire that you will prove it."

"Well, sir, I will begin. There are four suits in the pack which indicate the four seasons in the year—spring, summer, autumn, winter. As there are thirteen cards in a suit, so there are thirteen weeks in a season; there are also the same number of lunations; the twelve court cards represent the twelve signs of the zodiac, thru which the sun steers his diurnal course in one year. There are fifty-two cards in a pack; they directly answer for the number of weeks in a year. Thus, sir, I hope I have convinced you it is my almanac.

"Now, by your lordship's permission, I will prove it my prayer book, also. I look upon the four suits as representing the four prevailing religions: Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Paganism. The twelve court cards remind me of the twelve patriarchs, from whom sprang the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve apostles, and the twelve articles of Christian faith. The king reminds me of the allegiance due to his majesty. The queen of the same to her majesty. The ten brings to my recollection the ten tribes in the plains of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven; the ten plagues of Egypt; the ten commandments; the ten tribes cut off for their vice. The nine reminds me of the nine muses; also of the nine noble orders among men. The eight reminds me of the eight beatitudes; the eight persons saved in Noah's ark; the eight persons mentioned in the Scripture to be released from death to life. The seven reminds me of the seven administering spirits that stand before the throne of God; the seven liberal arts and sciences given by God for the instruction of man; the seven wonders of the world. The six reminds me of the six petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer; the six days of creation. The five reminds me of the five senses given by God to man—hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling; the five wise and the five foolish virgins. The four puts me in mind of the four evangelists; the four seasons of the year. The three reminds me of the Trinity; the three hours our Savior was on the cross; the three days he lay interred. The two reminds me of the two testaments; the two contrary principles struggling in man—virtue and vice. The ace reminds me of the only true God to adore, worship and serve, one truth to practice, and one good master to serve and obey."

"So far it is very well," said the nobleman. "But I believe you have omitted one card—the knave."

"True, my lord; the knave reminds me of your lordship's informant."

The nobleman became more pleased with Jack than before, freely forgave him, raised his wages, and discharged the informer.

* * *

The Estate.

A sad and seedy individual gained admission to the office of one of the best known legal firms, and penetrated to the sanctum of the senior partner.

"Well," asked the lawyer, "what do you want?"

The visitor was nothing if not frank.

"Half a dollar," he said boldly.

The man's unusual demeanor caught the lawyer's curiosity.

"There you are," he said, handing out the money. "And now I should like to have you tell me how you came to fall so low in the world."

The visitor laughed. "All my youth," he explained, "I had counted on inheriting something from my uncle, but when he died he left all he had to an orphan asylum."

"What did his estate consist of?"

"Ten children," said the visitor—and vanished.

* * *

He Favors It.

"Are you in favor of preparedness?"

"Very much so. There's nothing I hate so much as being forced to wait until 8:30 for the wife who should have finished dressing by 7:30."

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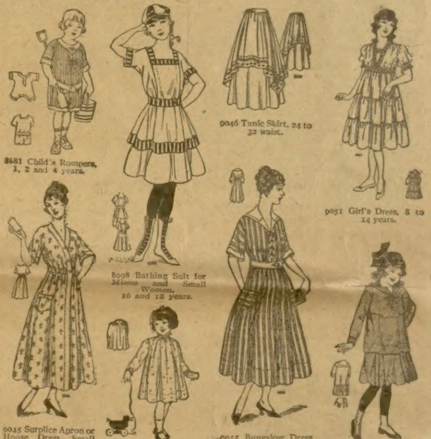

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9055 Bungalow Dress or Apron, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust.

8812 Girl's Middy Dress, 8 to 14 years.

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Here is the way we will do it: To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making, with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

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Only 10,000 of these marvelous, instantaneous picture-taking and making cameras to be sent out absolutely on approval without a penny in advance just to prove that it is the most wonderful invention—the camera sensation of the age. So **you** must send for it **quick!** Just think of it—the new Mandel-ette

Takes and Makes Finished Pictures INSTANTLY!

You press the button, drop card in developer and in **one minute** take out a **perfect, finished** post card photo 2½x3½ inches in size. Camera, itself, is about 4½x5x7 inches. Loads in daylight 16 to 50 **post cards at one time.**

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No difference who you are, where you live or what your age, we will send you the complete "mandel-ette" outfit absolutely on approval and give you 10 days to test it. If not satisfactory return it. But when you see what elegant pictures it takes—so quick, so easy, with no trouble at all—if you wish to keep it you simply send us $1 per month until our special price of only $5 is paid.

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Chicago Ferrotype Company,
Desk 347, Ferrotype Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

WOULDN'T TAKE $50 FOR MY "MANDEL-ETTE"

I received the "Mandel-ette" Camera yesterday and am well pleased with it. Learned how to make good pictures in an hour and would not take $50 for it if I could not get another one.

Alfred L. Dustman, Berlin Center, Ohio.

IT'S A WONDER

The "Mandel-ette" safely at hand, and I am getting fine pictures "first crack out of the box." It's a wonder and I anticipate much pleasure in operating it.

W. H. Starkweather,
Wisconsin Veterans' Home, Wis.

$14 IN 5 HOURS

The "Mandel-ette" Camera I got from you some time ago is a wonder. I took in $14 in about five hours with it on the 4th.

C. A. Sund, Blabon, N. Dak.

EVERYBODY LIKES IT

I received my "Mandel-ette" some time ago. It was in good shape and everything O. K. I am well pleased with it. Everybody likes it.

A. A. Newhall, Surf, Calif.

BEST CAMERA IN THE WORLD

I am so well pleased with the "Mandel-ette" that I would not take $25 for it if I could not get another like it. I know that when people learn the "Mandel-ette" process they will never be satisfied with the old plate and film cameras and there will be a big demand for the best camera in the world, "Mandel-ette."

A. H. Hoffman, Wildomar, Calif.

SURELY A WONDER

Received "Mandel-ette" as per agreement, and gentlemen, I wish to express my gratitude, most fully, for your prompt attention to my request.

I have already taken a few pictures with your camera, and I am forced to admit, that your so called "Mandel-ette" is most surely a Wonder. Arthur Hawthorn Lee,
Coalspur, Alberta

FINE RESULTS AT FIRST ATTEMPT

I received the camera all O. K. and I was surprised to see the results of the first attempts I made to turn out a photo. The "Mandel-ette" is one certainly worth the money and will do all you claim for it and even more. James Colyer, Monroe, Iowa.

GREAT PLEASURE WITH HIS

The Camera is certainly a dandy. I was surprised to know that it could take a photo so fast. I have had great pleasure with it. Everybody thinks it is the only thing.

Fred Witte, Central Point, Oregon

REMARKABLY CLEAR PICTURES

I received the "Mandel-ette" some time ago and am having all kinds of fun with it. It takes remarkably clear pictures. The "Mandel-ette" needs no recommendation. I just show the pictures to my friends and they all understand at once what a fine camera it is.

Gertrude E. Gesler, Bangor, Wis.

CAN'T BE BEAT

I beg to thank you for your "Mandel-ette". I got it all right. It is a daisy. The machine can't be beat, there is nothing like it.

James McDowell, Bismark, Mo.

PLEASED

Received my "Mandel-ette" on Saturday and am well pleased with it. I have never taken a camera or kodak picture before but my pictures were good. I would recommend the "Mandel-ette" to anybody wanting a good, inexpensive camera.

Margaret Smithe, Dexter, Mo.

$8 IN 4 HOURS—COULD HAVE MADE MORE

I got the "Mandel-ette" on Friday evening and started work on Saturday morning. Made $8 the first four hours and run out of cards. Could have made that much more if I had cards. Harry Singleton, Claysburg, Pa.

PICTURES A SURPRISE

Am well pleased with the "Mandel-ette". Had no previous experience with cameras or kodaks before but found the "Mandel-ette" very easy to operate. It does all you claim for it—the "One Minute" pictures are a surprise to everyone. Thank you for your promptness in sending the camera and supplies.

Mrs. Anna Hegner, Beaver Falls, Pa.

SURPRISED ABBOTT

I received my "Mandel-ette" and full equipment in fine condition. Have made several pictures, which surprised me, they being so natural. I have no knowledge of photography whatever, but made fine pictures at first attempt.

I expect to have lots of fun with my "Mandel-ette" in the future.

Horace B. Abbot, Beaukiss, Texas

Chicago Ferrotype Co.,
Desk 347, Ferrotype Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

Send me at once one complete model Mandel-ette Camera outfit including supply of post cards and instructions. I agree to examine and test it thoroughly and if satisfied keep it and pay you $1 a month until your special price of $5 is paid. Otherwise I will return it at the end of 10 days.

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